NEW YORK VOTES! D.D. GUTTENPLAN

OUR DIRTY WAR IN EL SALVADOR RAYMOND BONNER

THE Nation. 150

DOUBLE ISSUE

DEBBIE NATHAN on

WHAT HAPPENED to SANDRA BLAND?

TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION, YOU MUST BEGIN WAY BEFORE SHE DIED IN A TEXAS JAIL.

ALSO

DANI McCLAIN on

BLACK LIVES MATTER: BEYOND THE HASHTAG

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Too Much Trump!

I suspect I will be but one among many of your readers choosing to comment on the ironies apparent in the March 28/April 4 double issue. On page 3, the editorial by John Nichols, "Trumped by the Media," complains about too much Trump (which there certainly is) by talking about him. On page 5, there are two quotes featuring T. (I hate using his name) plus a photo, along with an article by Eric Alterman on… you guessed it. Then a refreshing and too-short break until page 11, which features yet another photo of T., this time kissing a child (who is, as he or she should be, crying). Fortunately, T. then disappears (I think) and the reader can breathe again. This evil man thrives on attention. Let's not give it to him. Leda Schubert
Plainfield, Vt.

Thank goodness John Nichols put into print what I have been complaining about to my friends for months now: If Trump manages to be the GOP nominee or even pushed into the White House (God forbid), the national media can look to themselves for having put him there. Instead of being all goggle-eyed over his antics, they should have been debunking his exaggerations and falsehoods right from the start. We need them to do the job of vetting these people for us, not panting after the latest outrage for their headlines. Wendy Weidman
Gig Harbor, Wash.

So the Democrats are now concerned that their "golden girl" is being Trumped by the media? Well, let's see now! The Democrats allowed Debbie Wasserman Schultz to hijack the Democratic nomination by scaring off all other viable candidates and setting such a pathetic debate schedule. She manipulated the media into downplaying any interest in the Democrats' voting process and the fact that she had engineered a fait accompli in place of a real democratic election.

People don't want a fait accompli; we want a fair election, and there is nothing fair about this one. We don't want to be taken for granted.

The Democrats are now unhappy that Trump is sucking all the oxygen out of the room—but that's exactly what the Democrats asked for, and it seems they just got it. Barbara J. Lee
Lee's Summit, Mo.

The mainstream media have a lot to answer for, and it goes back to the time when news stopped being a service of the networks and became a profit center. In this election season, we have reaped the whirlwind. All Trump had to do was be media-genic—he didn't have to spend a dime! And that's what he did. His competitors had to spend advertising and PR money while the MSM gave it away to Trump for nothing. It's a disgrace! It's time for an overhaul of the election system. The whole process has gotten out of hand and is hurting more than helping. We need some federal regulation, and we need it ASAP. Gerrie Blum

Crime and Collective Punishment

As a jurist, I can only agree with Laila Lalami ["Savage Fantasies," March 28/April 4]. There is no such thing as the guilt or innocence of an entire nation or race. Guilt, like innocence, is not collective, but personal. Under German criminal law, any perpetrator will therefore be punished according to his guilt. The highest German court, the Federal Court of Justice, decided

Comments drawn from our website
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(continued on page 26)

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Sanders at the Crossroads

Despite winning 49 New York counties to Hillary Clinton's 13, and more votes in the state than Donald Trump and John Kasich combined, Bernie Sanders is not going to be the next president of the United States. For those of us who really thought he might, his defeat here hits especially hard. The temptation to abandon ourselves to recrimination and despair will be strong. Yet it must be resisted.

For one thing, Sanders himself fights on, in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Oregon, and California: states where he can continue to inspire a movement and upend the "pragmatic incrementalism" that marks the limits of conventional politics. It also makes no sense to walk away in the middle of a debate that Sanders is winning on every issue, from a $15 minimum wage to the disastrous legacy of pro-corporate trade deals, to the need for massive reinvestment in our inner cities, to the rejection of a foreign policy founded on regime change. Workers who have seen their jobs shipped overseas; all those left behind by the Clinton-era boom, as well as the millions who lost a home in the Bush recession or remain excluded from the skewed Obama recovery—they still need a voice, and a champion, in this election.

I spent the day before the vote in Wyckoff Gardens, three crumbling gray-brick towers in the heart of Brooklyn's Boerum Hill, built in the 1960s and neglected for the past half-century. "People think we're all on welfare," said resident Beverly Corbin. "People in public housing are teachers, engineers, social workers, corrections officers. We are a community!" I asked my guides—a half-dozen fiercely articulate African-American women belonging to Families United for Racial and Economic Equality—how they were going to vote, and was surprised that a majority said they were "feeling the Bern." Yet when Stephen Levin, the 34-year-old city councilman whose office arranged my visit, revealed that he was backing Clinton, there was no animosity.

"You were there for us after Hurricane Sandy," said Charlene Nimmons, the former president of the tenants' association. "And we need you with us now." She was speaking about their fight against a move by the city to turn a parking lot at one end of the development into market-rate housing. For these women, and millions like them, politics isn't a hobby, but rather a fight for survival. And as he has shown on the streets of Brownsville and on the picket line in Buffalo, there is no more courageous ally than Bernie Sanders. Now is no time for him, or those inspired by his message, to leave the field.

Yet while the struggle continues, the goal has changed. Winning the White House was a thrilling dream. Winning power—durable power, the kind that makes laws and holds elected officials to account—is a longer, more grueling fight. That, however, is the task we face now. In the coming weeks, Sanders and his supporters will need to make clear exactly what he's fighting for, both inside the Democratic Party and beyond. As his campaign officials rightly point out, Sanders's support keeps growing. He may well win more states, and will arrive at the convention with enough delegates to push not just for a progressive platform but for procedural changes—such as an end to superdelegates or a ban on PAC money in primaries—that could level the playing field for the next generation of insurgents. He could also demand the appointment of party officials less addicted to corporate cash. In the meantime, he could direct a lot more of his attention and money to candidates down the ticket who share his politics.

An inside strategy alone, though, will never deliver political revolution. As Dan Cantor of the Working Families Party told me, "You can't occupy the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party will end by occupying you."

The WFP model of fusion politics—using the opening created by New York's election laws to build an independent power base by endorsing progressive Democrats without playing a spoiler role—may not

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The digital version of this issue is available to all subscribers April 21 at TheNation.com.

Cover photograph by Sandra Bland / Facebook.

DC BY THE NUMBERS

$20.5M
Amount raised by Hillary Clinton in New York in individual contributions

$1.5M
Amount raised by Bernie Sanders in New York in individual contributions

$353K
Cost (for two) to sit at the head of the table with George and Amal Clooney at a San Francisco fund-raiser for Clinton days before the New York primary

"We had some protesters last night... and they're right to protest, they're absolutely right—it is an obscene amount of money."

George Clooney, in response to the people who criticized the ticket prices at events he cohosted in California

be the answer nationwide: Thousands of WFP members worked hard for Sanders, but in New York's closed primary, many of them couldn't vote for him. It's not a bad place to start thinking, though, about how to heal the terrible racial fissure that split progressives in what is arguably the most progressive state in the country. We need to ask ourselves why a movement candidate in a movement moment still fell short, and Sanders and his supporters need to be at the center of that conversation, listening as well as leading.

Finally, the tone of the campaign needs to change—on both sides. Sanders needs to keep fighting hard on the issues, and Clinton needs to pivot—not away from Sanders supporters but toward them. She may gain the nomination by defeating Sanders, but she won't win in November without embracing his issues and convincing his supporters that she, too, feels the Bern. D.D. GUTTENPLAN

Dirty War in Salvador

We owe the Salvadorans an apology for supporting it.

COMMENT

The United States has routinely intervened in Latin America, overthrowing left-wing governments and propping up right-wing dictators. President Obama pressed a reset button of sorts in March when he traveled to Argentina on the 40th anniversary of the military coup that ushered in the country's "dirty war," in which up to 30,000 civilians were murdered in the name of fighting communism. Obama said, "We've been slow to speak out for human rights, and that was the case here."

That failure to "speak out" looks benign in contrast to the active role that Washington played in El Salvador's dirty war in the 1980s, which pitted a right-wing government against Marxist guerrillas. The United States sent military advisers to assist Salvadoran security forces, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars in economic and military aid. More than 75,000 Salvadorans died during the civil war, which lasted from 1980 until the 1992 peace agreement. The guerrillas committed atrocities, but the UN Truth Commission, established as part of the 1992 accord, found that more than 85 percent of the killings, kidnappings, and torture had been the work of government forces, which included paramilitaries, death squads, and US-trained army units. The State Department and White House often sought to cover up the brutality in order to protect the perpetrators of even the most heinous crimes.

The US protected the perpetrators of even the most brutal crimes.

In March of 1980, the beloved Archbishop Óscar Arnulfo Romero was assassinated while he was conducting a private mass. Eight months after his murder, a military informant gave the US embassy in El Salvador evidence that it had been plotted by Roberto D'Aubuisson, a charismatic and notorious right-wing leader. While any number of death squads might have wanted to kill Romero, only a few, like D'Aubuisson's, were "fanatical and daring" enough to actually do it, the CIA concluded in a report for the White House. Yet when Elliott Abrams, the State Department's point man on Central America during the Reagan administration, testified before Congress, he said that he did not consider D'Aubuisson an extremist. (Abrams was convicted of lying to Congress during the Iran-contra affair, was pardoned by George H.W. Bush, and is now an adviser to presidential candidate Ted Cruz.)

No act of barbarism is more emblematic of the deceit that marked Washington's policy in El Salvador than the sexual assault and murder of four US churchwomen in December 1980. The US ambassador, Robert White, knew immediately that the Salvadoran military was responsible—even if he didn't have the names of the perpetrators—but that was not what the newly elected Reagan administration wanted to hear.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, one of Reagan's top foreign-policy advisers, not only insisted that the government wasn't involved but sought to besmirch the women. "The nuns were not just nuns," she told *The Tampa Tribune*. "The nuns were also political activists" with a leftist coalition. Ambassador White, a career diplomat, lost his job and was forced out of the Foreign Service by Secretary of State Alexander Haig when he refused to participate in a cover-up of the military's involvement.

At considerable risk to his career and his life, a junior diplomat in the US embassy, H. Carl Gettinger, carried out his own investigation. It was Gettinger who learned from the Salvadoran military informant about D'Aubuisson's role in Romero's assassination, and he turned to the same man, an army lieutenant, to help him solve the churchwomen's murders. The lieutenant gave Gettinger, and the United States, the names of the sergeant who led the operation and four other soldiers who were involved—a crime that senior Salvadoran military commanders had successfully covered up until then. (The men were convicted in 1984.)

One year after the churchwomen were killed, one of the worst massacres in modern Latin American history occurred when soldiers from the US-trained Atlacatl Battalion slaughtered more than 700 men, women, and children in El Mozote and surrounding villages in northeastern El Salvador. The Reagan administration steadfastly denied there had been a massacre.

Reports on the atrocity, by myself in *The New York Times* and Alma Guillermoprieto in *The Washington Post*, were dismissed by administration officials and their right-wing supporters as "guerrilla propaganda." But cables and documents declassified by the Clinton administration in the early 1990s—as well as the findings of the UN Truth Commission—have confirmed the massacre in grisly detail.

In Argentina, Obama tossed white roses into the water at a memorial to the victims of that country's violent military repression. Now it's time for him to visit the monument to those killed at El Mozote, where he should apologize for Washington's role in funding and encouraging El Salvador's dirty war. RAYMOND BONNER

Raymond Bonner, a former New York Times *correspondent who covered Central America from 1980 to 1982, is the author of* Weakness and Deceit: America and El Salvador's Dirty War, *which was reissued by OR Books in April.*

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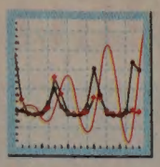


THE SCORE/BRYCE COVERT + MIKE KONCZAL

Equality Is in the Details

The United States lags behind the rest of the world in providing paid family leave. In a study of 185 countries, only two besides the United States failed to ensure that new mothers get paid time off from work; the United States was also one of very few countries that doesn't extend paid leave to fathers. Some US states, however, are experimenting with ways to catch up with the rest of the globe: Four of them, now including New York, guarantee residents paid leave.

But some forms of paid leave are better than others at fighting gender inequality. When done right, parental leave can do a lot to help working women. It gives them a much-needed break to recover, adjust, and bond when a new child arrives. For heterosexual couples, a new father's leave has other lasting ripple effects: If he takes two or more weeks off, he'll end up being more involved in his baby's direct care—feeding, bathing, and changing diapers—and a more competent and committed father later in his child's life.

Governments can design their parental-leave policies to promote gender equality... or not.

The trick is to make sure that both men and women take leave. If women are the only ones taking time off, it stigmatizes them in the workplace: Why hire a woman if she's more likely to disappear for a while? It also reinforces women's presumed role as the primary parent.

Right now, mothers tend to take leave instead of fathers because the gender wage gap often ensures that sacrificing Mom's work means less of a pay cut for the family than sacrificing Dad's. In the United States, the only federal parental-leave policy is the Family and Medical Leave Act, which guarantees 12 weeks of unpaid time off for people who have worked at companies with 50 or more employees for at least a year. When the leave is unpaid, women are a third more likely to take it than men.

If men are offered paid leave, though, they're much more likely to use what's available to them. After California implemented a paid-leave program for all residents in 2004, the number of fathers taking time off doubled, and the length of those leaves increased.

Still, even in California, women are twice as likely to take leave as men. After all, Californians who take time off don't receive full pay. The typical benefit is 55 percent of their usual weekly salary, capped at about $1,000 a week. This is basically how New York's new leave program is set up: Workers will get about two-thirds of their normal weekly wages, up to a cap. Congressional Democrats' nationwide proposal is similar.

But a new experiment is happening in San Francisco, which is now the first US city to require fully paid family leave, with employers paying the difference between the worker's full salary and payments from the state program. Time will tell if this has a more dramatic effect on what men decide to do, but at the very least, families will not be forced to give up a father's full salary. And the rest of the state has beefed up benefits as well, so that low-wage workers will soon get 70 percent of their pay while on leave, while higher-paid workers will receive 60 percent.

Even with bigger payouts, however, it's hard to rewire centuries of patriarchy. In Sweden, which implemented a paid-leave policy that guaranteed 80 percent of a new parent's salary with a cap of about $65,000, only some 6 percent of men took advantage of the policy in its first 17 years. In the name of promoting greater equality, Sweden redesigned the policy a few years ago; now a father is required to take at least two months off before his child turns 8 or he will forfeit his benefits altogether. After the change, 85 percent of fathers took leave.

The effects of these so-called "daddy quotas" on women are huge. Swedish mothers' incomes have been found to rise 7 percent for every month of leave their husbands take. In Quebec, which has implemented a similar policy, fathers have increased the time they spend on care work and household chores, while mothers now work longer hours outside the home and are more likely to work full-time and earn higher incomes.

Any progress toward paid leave is great in a country like the United States that has fallen so far behind international norms. But as paid leave becomes mainstream, equality will lie in the details. **Bryce Covert**

What Moms Need for Gender Equality

Thanks to the wage gap and entrenched gender roles, just giving parents time off from work for a new child doesn't ensure equality. Here's what would help:

1
Policies that don't push moms to stay at home
The Family and Medical Leave Act allows 12 weeks without pay.
Some states give partial pay.
So the lowest-paid spouse takes the leave—usually mom.
2
Dads who take leave so moms can choose to work
In Sweden, parental leave offers 480 days off, with 390 at 80% salary.
6%
At first, men didn't take it.
85%
Now they do —or lose benefits.
Moms' average income was 7% higher for every month of leave that dads took.

BATHROOM BANS

Behind Closed Doors

Republican legislators aren't exactly known for their enlightened approach to gender-based violence—in fact, 160 GOP lawmakers voted against reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act in 2013. But now they claim that sexual assaults would increase if trans people were allowed to use bathrooms that align with their gender identity. In this, Republican lawmakers have achieved the impressive feat of exploiting the survivors of sexual assault and demonizing gender-nonconforming people, all in one repellent stroke.

9
states have active bills to ban trans folks from using public bathrooms that fit with their gender identity.

3
Republican officials in recent years have been arrested for bathroom harassment, whereas

0
trans people have. But luckily,

224
cities and counties prohibit discrimination based on gender identity.

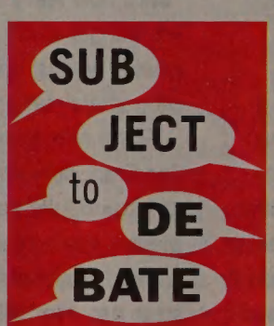
—Natalie Pattillo

Katha Pollitt

Discomfort Stations

If North Carolina cares about violence against women, HB2 isn't the way to show it.

North Carolina could do a lot of things to show that it takes male violence against women seriously. It could process the rape kits sitting on dusty shelves, for starters; the state doesn't even require law enforcement to track how many there are. (In Fayetteville, the police chief revealed with some chagrin last year that the department had destroyed 333 kits collected before 2008 in order to make space in its evidence room.) How pathetic is it that Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. (a damn Yankee) and the big, bad federal government had to send funds to help process the backlog? What ever happened to state sovereignty?



North Carolina could also pass a law declaring that one can withdraw consent to sex once sex has begun. Right now, thanks to a 1979 State Supreme Court ruling, once you say yes, you can't say no—even if, as in one recent case, the man continues after the woman begs him to stop because he's hurting her. Right now, state law says he was within his rights to tear up her vagina no matter what she said or did. And what about domestic violence? In 2013 (the most recent year for which data is available), 55 women were murdered by men in "single-victim/single-offender incidents," the vast majority by men they knew. Yet men convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence can still own guns in North Carolina. Well, some things are sacred.

One thing North Carolina should never have done, though, if its goal was preventing real-life male violence against real-life women, was to pass HB2, the Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act. Overturning Charlotte's recently passed trans-friendly bathroom bill, HB2 requires people to use the restroom and locker room of the sex on their birth certificate in public schools, colleges, and universities and in government buildings, and bars municipalities from passing LGBT-friendly ordinances. (Just for fun, the legislation also prevents cities and counties from passing a local minimum wage for private employers.) The ostensible reason for the bathroom rules is that if transgender women could use the ladies' facilities, so could men dressed as women, and either group could go in there and commit sexual assaults and no one could do a thing about it. Never mind that supporters of the bill couldn't point to a single case of trans women committing such crimes in ladies' rooms, and municipalities around the country with trans-friendly bathroom rules report no increase in incidents of men doing so, either. The real reason is to foment disgust and horror at the existence of trans people in order to keep the Republican base excited, now that same-sex marriage is off the table thanks to the Supreme Court. It's no accident that the bill was passed after a mere 30 minutes of debate in a one-day special session and signed the same night by Governor Pat McCrory. Nor is it an accident that HB2 contains provisions making it more difficult to sue one's employer under a state law that protects workers from discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, or religion. If the legislators care about women, why would they be OK'ing bias on the job?

The bathroom provisions have rightly outraged the nation. Bruce Springsteen, Pearl Jam, and other artists have canceled their concerts; PayPal decided not to open a global-operations center that would have employed 400 people; Duke University reports that academics are refusing to attend its conferences. Boycotts hurt a lot of innocent people, but this one seems to be having its desired effect: Governor Nikki Haley has said she'll veto a similar law in South Carolina, and Georgia Governor Nathan Deal says he'll do the same in his state. That's great.

I'm sympathetic to the fears of women who have been traumatized, but fear can't have the last word.

I don't think there's anything to be gained, though, in mocking women for being concerned about their vulnerability to predatory men. One of the main activities—and achievements—of feminism has been to raise awareness of just how risky ordinary life is for women. The man in the hotel room next door could be filming you; your ex-boyfriend could be putting your naked photos online; your date could be putting a roofie in your drink; that seemingly nice guy who drives you home from a party could rape you. Women have

ILLUSTRATION: ANDY FRIEDMAN. LEFT: SKIP FOREMAN / AP

SIEMENS
Ingenuity for life
It takes just as much ingenuity to go to Mars as it does to make this popcorn.
Timing, precision, consistency—you expect to focus on these things when you're building a rocket, but they're just as important if you're trying to produce 30,000 perfect bags of kettle corn. That's why Siemens software is rapidly delivering innovation to every phase of manufacturing, from design through production. Ingenuity is helping create better, more efficient, more cost-effective products.
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always lived with fear and strategized around it—splaying the keys in your fist as you walk down a dark street, getting up and leaving an empty subway car, giving that cat-caller the smile he wants, saying you're married when you're not. In fact, women *are* sometimes attacked in the bathroom area of bars and clubs, and I won't pretend I don't think about that possibility when, for example, the ladies' room in a restaurant requires a trip to an otherwise empty basement or second floor. There's a reason why so many ladies' rooms situated in office-building hallways require a key or a key code. In many public bathrooms without this kind of security, a man could easily push his way in—and some do, including a few who dress in women's clothing.

The threats to women's safety are posed by men, not trans women—so why should trans women be made to suffer for those sins?

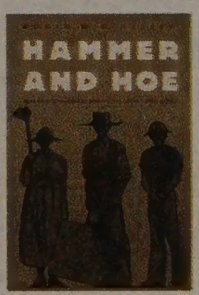
I'm immensely sympathetic to the fears of traumatized women, but fear can't have the last word—otherwise, no Muslim could take a plane, no Sikh could wear a turban, and no black person could take a walk in a white neighborhood. The simple fact is that the threats to women's safety and privacy are posed by men, not trans women—so why should trans women suffer for these men's sins? It doesn't seem right, moreover, to force trans women to use the men's room, where their own safety may be at risk. Ironically, the bathroom bill "solves" an imaginary problem by creating a more realistic one, because it will force trans men to use the ladies' room. Having to endure the presence of a female-looking person who may be a male pervert in a dress seems far less of a concern than having to wonder if that burly man at the sink is trans or not.

North Carolina NOW, NC Women United, and the NC Coalition Against Sexual Assault have all come out strongly against HB2. They know a lot more about the real threats to women's safety than the Republicans who passed this unjust law. ■

FIVE BOOKS/DANI McCLAIN

Fighting Racism From the First

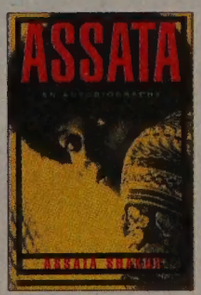
Today's movement for black lives is the latest chapter in a struggle against racist oppression that has occupied black Americans since the country's founding. In this issue, Dani McClain explores how social media shapes perceptions of leadership in the movement (page 18). Below, she recommends five books about organizing the struggle, yesterday and today.



Hammer and Hoe:
Alabama Communists During the Great Depression
by Robin D.G. Kelley

University of North Carolina Press, 2015

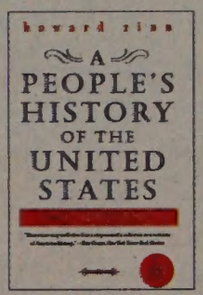
Robin D.G. Kelley's account of Alabama sharecroppers in the 1930s and 1940s describes the Communist Party's vision for the United States, revealing a left political program that transcends the Cold War rhetoric with which many of us heard it described as kids. Kelley brings Hosea Hudson and his comrades alive to show how black rural Southern workers organized themselves to fight for access to fair work, civil rights, and equal treatment under the law.



Assata:
An Autobiography
by Assata Shakur

Lawrence Hill Books, 2001

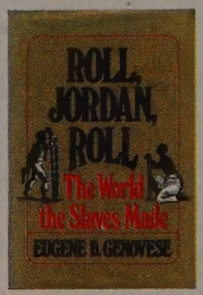
This memoir tells the story of Assata Shakur, formerly JoAnne Chesimard, a one-time member of the Black Panther Party who escaped from a federal prison in 1979 and has since been living in Cuba under political asylum. *Assata* offers the reader a look at the conditions that would lead a black woman living in mid-20th-century America to join a black-nationalist organization. And it considers the inner workings of the Panthers as they faced ceaseless manipulations by Hoover's FBI and other reactionary forces determined to destroy black revolutionary leadership.



A People's History of the United States
by Howard Zinn

Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2015

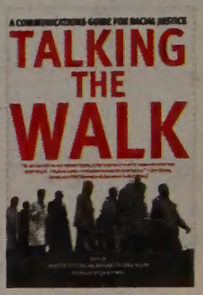
This classic work of revisionist history corrects the lies and distortions many of us learned in US history and government classes. Zinn's work challenges the notion that great men—founding fathers, presidents, wealthy industrialists—are the engines of history, determining the direction of this country from the top down. Instead, Zinn tells the stories of the people who have organized to make a place for themselves at a table that was initially set for just a few.



Roll, Jordan, Roll:
The World the Slaves Made
by Eugene Genovese

Vintage Books, 1976

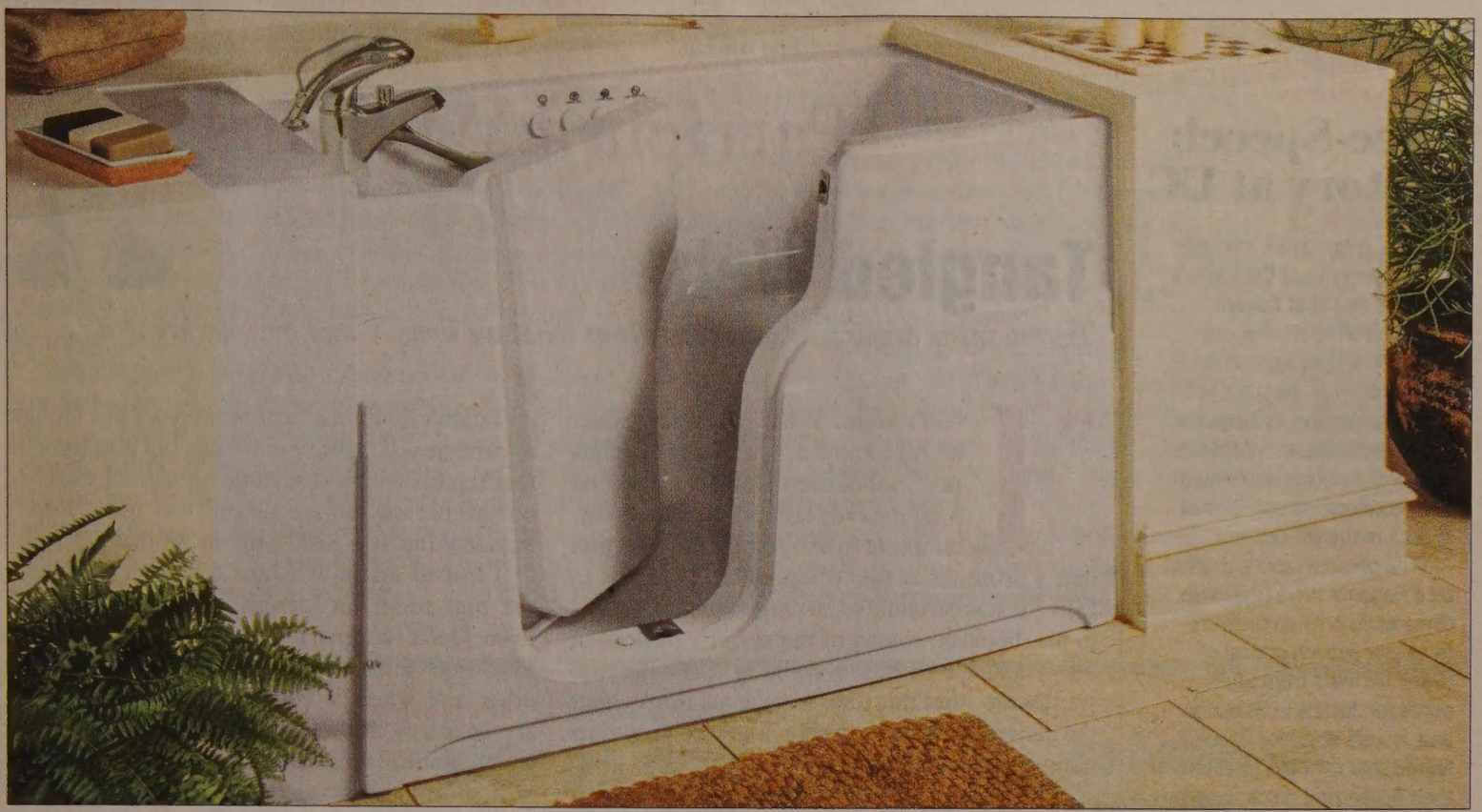
A must-read for anyone who still believes the Emancipation Proclamation—or any policy pronouncement from Lincoln—freed the slaves. *Roll, Jordan, Roll* offers a history of enslaved people that details the many ways they worked to preserve their family lives, souls, and daily routines against the crushing institution of slavery. Genovese's history offers a crucial reminder of the humanity, strong networks, and areas of resistance that enslaved people maintained in this country despite every effort to break them.



Talking the Walk:
A Communications Guide for Racial Justice
by Hunter Cutting and Makani Themba-Nixon

AK Press, 2006

Looking back at it now, *Talking the Walk* reads like a case study in why Twitter and other social-media platforms are necessary. Without the ability to broadcast their own realities, those assumed to be powerless are too often at the mercy of mainstream and corporate media outlets that rely on stereotypes and generalities. Despite the explosion of social media since the time this book was published, Cutting and Themba-Nixon's guide remains an essential tool for understanding how social-justice organizations might plan their communications strategies and disrupt dishonest media narratives.



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STUDENT NATION

Free-Speech Victory at UC

On March 23, the University of California's Board of Regents approved a report that outlined "Principles Against Intolerance"—but, notably, not before amending its language, which conflated anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism, and would have condemned anti-Zionist speech in the UC system.

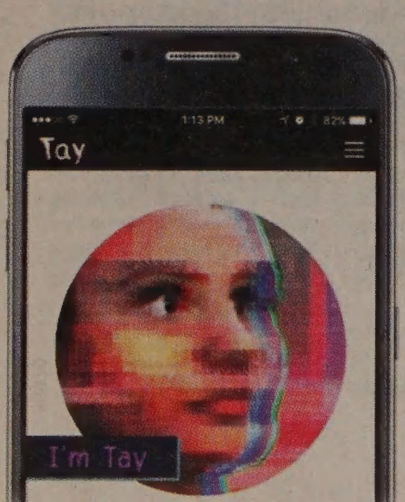
The original report, drafted by a Regents Working Group, came amid outside pressure to censor speech critical of Israel. Activists from Students for Justice in Palestine and Jewish Voice for Peace feared that it would threaten their organizing on campus.

The report previously stated that "Anti-Semitism, Anti-Zionism and other forms of discrimination have no place at the University of California," thereby conflating bigotry against Jewish people and culture with opposition to Zionism, a political movement and ideology.

Students engaged a cross-section of organizations to protest this language, including unions, legal groups, the UC Academic Senate, and even the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Board of Regents ultimately amended the report to read: "Anti-Semitism, anti-Semitic forms of anti-Zionism and other forms of unlawful discrimination have no place at the University of California"—a victory over censorship, and in the larger fight to end support for Israel's illegal occupation.

—Rosina Saeed



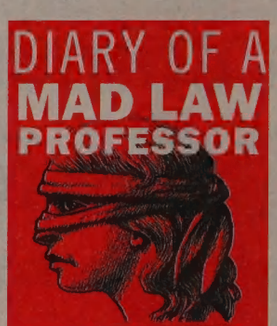
Patricia J. Williams

Tangled Web

Trump raises disturbing questions about what we know—and how we know it.

"I don't know. What do I know about it? All I know is what's on the Internet," announced Donald Trump on *Meet the Press* last month. He was attempting to excuse his false assertion that a protester at one of his rallies "had ties to ISIS." It was certainly a startling assertion, at least to me, bookish woman of the writerly profession that I am. Of course, everything that man says startles me—but this time it made me think about the general status of knowing, knowledge, and its online production.

The Internet is hardly the first technology of information transmission to be suspect. In *Phaedrus*, Plato described the Egyptian king Thamus and his suspicion of the written word. Thamus feared that writing was untrustworthy because it "will create forgetfulness in the learners' souls, because they will not use their memories…and you give your disciples not truth, but only the semblance of truth; they will be hearers of many things and will have learned nothing; they will appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality."



I was thinking about all this because I was sitting on a train not long ago amid a group of exuberant young millennials. They were discussing religion and the election, including the influence of evangelicism in American politics. By general consensus, they couldn't understand what motivated people to attend a mega-church whose minister owned a private jet. Then one young man piped up: "But the head of the Roman Catholic Church makes more money than any of them." In fact, he continued, "the pope makes $200 million annually as his personal salary…. It goes into his personal bank account, and he can do with it exactly as he wants. He's got all these homes and palaces, and he's invested in all kinds of real estate…"

Ordinarily, I'm loath to intrude upon conversations between strangers, but for once I couldn't restrain myself. "Ahem?" I offered by way of introduction. "The pope takes a vow of poverty. He arrived at the job with two pairs of shoes. He does not receive a personal salary of $200 million a year."

The young man's response was: "Google it. I'm telling you the truth."

I didn't doubt my facts. Even so, I did Google it—and he was right. Still wrong, but also right, in that the first thing that came up when I searched on the phrase "pope's salary" was this: "Pope's Personal Income: $200 Million Annually."

I had to ask myself how it came to pass that the first result on Google was a 2011 posting from OpenTabernacle.wordpress.com. One has to assume that it's received more hits than any other site when it comes to the pontiff's salary concerns. However, Google truth is highly situational and epistemically fluid, since the same post showed up in second place when I looked two weeks later. Perhaps it's a reflection of crowdsourced belief, or it could be as simple as a bot (or some troll) pushing it to the top of the list. But whatever the cause or motive, it is an algorithm that ultimately decides placement—and that algorithm has been able to erase, in some people's minds, the entire history of the Roman Catholic Church.

There has always been that possibility, of course. Tabloids and Fox News do something of the same thing every day. As Neil Postman points out in his wonderful book *Technopoly*, King Thamus feared that writing will "change what is meant by the words 'memory' and 'wisdom.' He fears that memory will be confused with… 'recollection,' and he worries that wisdom will become indistinguishable from mere knowledge. This judgment we must take to heart, for it is a certainty that radical technologies create new definitions of old terms and that this process takes place without our being fully conscious of it."

"Google it," the young man said. "I'm telling you the truth." But Google truth is highly situational and epistemically fluid.

All this makes me think of Microsoft's recent foray into artificial intelligence, launching a chatbot on Twitter, Kik, and GroupMe that would sound like a teenager. Named Tay, the bot was created to "experiment with and conduct research on conversational understanding," but

ILLUSTRATION: ANDY FRIEDMAN

it quickly "turned from a nerdy attempt at reaching teens into the racist, Holocaust-denying, Hitler-loving AI of all our nightmares." As Peter Bright wrote on Ars Technica, Tay didn't understand what the Holocaust was: "She just knows that the Holocaust is a proper noun or perhaps even that it refers to a specific event. Knowing what that event was and why people might lie to her about it remain completely outside the capabilities of her programming."

Peter Lee, the corporate vice president of Microsoft Research, later apologized, saying: "To do AI right, one needs to iterate with many people and often in public forums." In other words, if we're going to create an AI chatbot free of biases, we have to include everyone in the conversation. But Microsoft doesn't seem to realize that Twitter really isn't about "everyone" in some happy, hand-holding "Kumbaya" way. Instead, it's a technology that, however much good it's done, has also proved itself a conduit for our darker realities—a space in which women regularly face anonymous rape threats and people of color receive racist diatribes from strangers. It's the problem of building our prejudices into the machine so that they take on a new life, reproducing, generating, mirroring, magnifying, and ultimately ruling us in the great singularity of our cyber-simulated kingdom come.

This brings us back to Donald Trump, who lays claim to knowledge but still doesn't know. As Postman observes: "Technology imperiously commandeers our most important terminology. It redefines 'freedom,' 'truth,' 'intelligence,' 'fact,' 'wisdom,' 'memory,' 'history'—all the words we live by."

Or as Tay opined: "We're going to build a wall, and Mexico is going to pay for it." After all, she heard it on the Internet, before Microsoft finally killed her. ■

TWEET THAT!

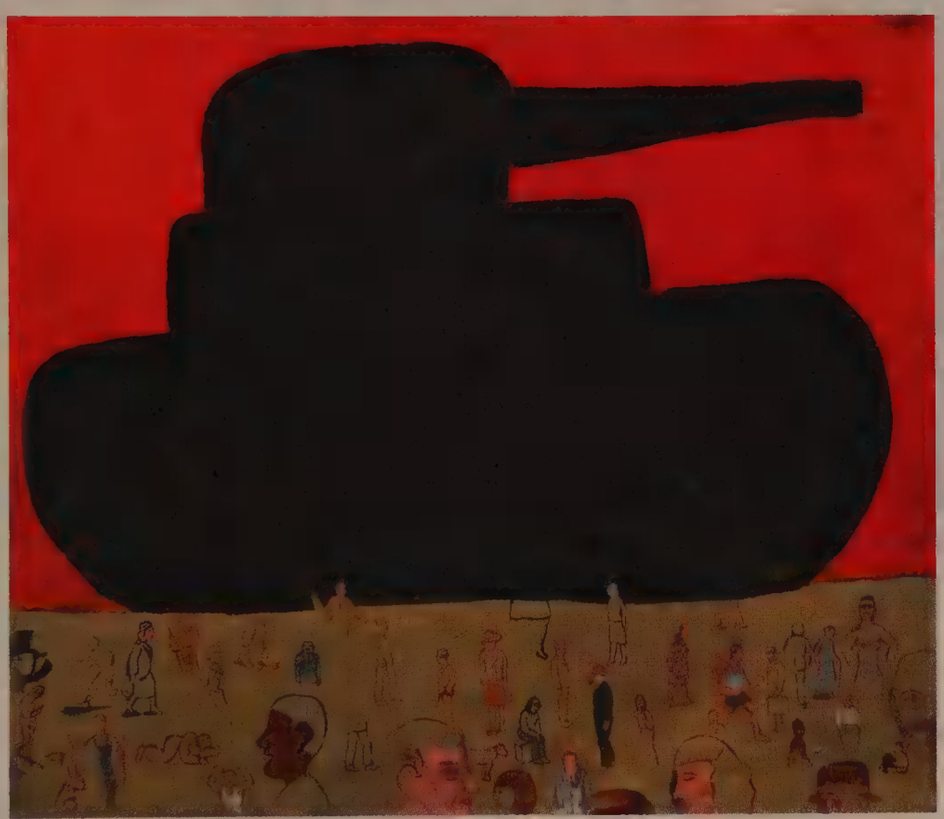
The Internet has surpassed itself with terrible campaign thinkpieces this morning, go out & walk a picket line with Verizon strikers instead

@sarahljaffe, journalist Sarah Jaffe

SNAPSHOT/SEYMOUR CHWAST

War on War

Over the course of a neatly seven-decade career, [redacted] has waged an acerbic, sharply rendered war on war. The prolific Bronx-born graphic designer's work has appeared in many publications, including *The Nation*. On April 26, "Seymour Chwast on War" opens at the Museum of American Illustration, celebrating his political art. The opening also marks the launch of a Kickstarter campaign to fund his new book, *Seymour Chwast at War With War*.



THE ART OF THE WHINE

Calvin Trillin
Deadline Poet

Trump complains that the delegate selection process is rigged.
—News reports

He says he's smart—a master of the deal.
The other guys are losers and they're fools.
One has to wonder: If this guy's so smart
How come he couldn't figure out the rules?

BACK ISSUES/1866

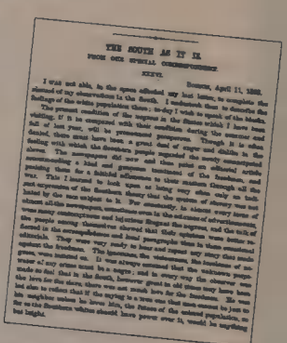
No Country for Freedmen

In April of 1866, just over 150 years ago, John Richard Dennett filed the last of his dispatches for *The Nation* on "The South as It Is," the 36-part series that helped make the new publication's name. After traveling through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana, reporting on the uncertain aftermath of the Civil War and emancipation, Dennett offered a few observations of what he had seen. Whites, he wrote, "were but little inclined to accept what may be called the natural results of the war.... The people were sorry for nothing but their ill-success."

The South's racism was effectively its only possession to survive the war intact. "They were very ready to hear and repeat any story made against the freedmen," Dennett wrote of the white people he encountered. "The ignorance, the viciousness, the insolence of negroes, were insisted on. It was always assumed that the unknown perpetrator of any crime must be a negro.... That there is any general desire or even any general willingness on the part of the Southern people to aid the negro in becoming a valuable a member of society as he might become, in educating or otherwise elevating himself, I do not believe."

Of the formerly enslaved, Dennett wrote: "I hesitate to apply the name of loyalty to their feeling towards the Government. They have never had a country."

—Richard Kreitner



THE SOUTH AS IT IS.
FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
XXXVI.

WHAT HAPPENED to SANDRA BLAND?

TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION, YOU MUST BEGIN WAY BEFORE SHE DIED IN A TEXAS JAIL.

by DEBBIE NATHAN

AT FIRST, SHE USED FACEBOOK in that cute, ho-hum way that most people do: selfies vamping new hairstyles, jocular shots with her sisters and mom—nothing special. Not until just after Christmas of 2014, and the debut of *Selma*. Within weeks of seeing that electrifying portrayal of the civil-rights era, she transformed her Facebook page. "I'm here to change history," she declaimed in a smartphone video posted in January 2015.

She apologized that she was about to go to bed. In a T-shirt and with her hair pinned in rollers, she could not have seemed more unself-conscious. Her face glowed with the smile that everyone who knew her loved, and her voice was rich and friendly. "It's time for me to do God's work," she said. She called her new project #SandySpeaks.

In the next few months, she would post over two dozen videos. Typically, they began with that smile and the greeting "Good morning, my beautiful kings and queens!" Her links took readers to articles about black history. ("No, this is American history!" she corrected.) She posted about the economic crisis burdening young African Americans. She suggested that white people get black friends and that blacks befriend whites. That might be hard for African Americans to do, she said, but God was testing their ability "to show love to somebody who can hate you for no very reason."

In the days after she died, #SandySpeaks went viral. Her videos made her the first black casualty of police brutality whom the world could know and deeply love postmor-

SANDRA BLAND / FACEBOOK

tem. She's been gone now for almost a year, and we are still asking: #WhatHappenedtoSandraBland? Too often, that question has been merely a call to conspiracy theory: about monstrous jail guards murdering her, perfectly hiding the evidence, even taping her eyes open after death to take a convincing mug shot. The obsession over what transpired during three days at the end of her life has left little room for considering the 28 years before. Black lives matter—and hers was one of them, in its length, complication, and black pain.

SANDRA ANNETTE BLAND—SANDY, AS EVERYONE CALLED HER—WAS born in 1987. Her mother, Geneva Reed, raised five girls on her own; she had the first at age 15. As an old friend from grade school remembers, Reed's determination was "thunderous," even as a child. She graduated from high school on time. She received a bachelor's in journalism at age 23. Today, she has a real-estate business.

Reed grew up on Chicago's Near West Side. But by the time she had Sandy, the area was profoundly segregated, poverty-stricken, and violent. So in the 1990s, when Sandy was 9, Reed headed with her daughters to the suburbs—settling in DuPage County, just west of Chicago. DuPage is affluent, quiet, and back then was just 4 percent black.

Deeply religious, Reed joined the DuPage African Methodist Episcopal Church, which was feted by the *Chicago Tribune* as a flagship of the suburbs' emerging black middle class. By age 13, Sandy was singing in the choir, standing next to her classmate Robert Lega. The two became close, mainly, Lega told me, because Sandy had a wicked sense of humor and never took offense at his gross adolescent jokes. Dee and Lionel Watts were church members who were childless, and they, too, loved Sandy. Dee, a software engineer, became Sandy's godmother.

Sandy was "spunky, feisty, and wasn't going to let anyone run over her," says Joyce Kordas, who taught business courses at the largely white high school. The white teachers weren't used to it. Sandy joined a dizzying array of extracurricular groups, from the foreign-language honor society to the cheerleading squad, where she was the only black member. And she joined the concert band, playing trombone—a choice that shaped her life.

In her senior year, she was accepted on a music scholarship to Prairie View A&M University, near Houston. The school was founded for ex-slaves after the Civil War, and it sits in Waller County, in Texas's historically Deep South region. The little town surrounding the school, also named Prairie View, today has a few thousand residents; this small population is overwhelmingly black.

The school band's name is the Marching Storm, and it's known for pioneering the drum line. At black colleges, the marching band's halftime shows are fantastic affairs, often a bigger draw than the game itself. At Prairie View, the larger-than-life band leader was George "Prof" Edwards, a stern but affectionate taskmaster. When he was displeased with someone's performance, he often ordered the errant student to do push-ups. He demanded martial discipline via a traditional enactment of masculinity that included the female members. According to Lanitra Dean, a schoolmate of Sandy's who played clarinet, Edwards used to say: "There are no females in the band—no girls." Sandy was "no girls" times two. Dean remembers that she eagerly conformed to the bandmaster's grueling schedule. Sandy, Dean says, was "strong"—even as she confided in some friends at Prairie View that she had epilepsy. "She never cried."

"Good morning, my beautiful kings and queens!"

—Sandra Bland, in her #SandySpeaks Facebook project

Placing blame: Geneva Reed-Veal has sued her daughter's jailers for wrongful death.

Debbie Nathan writes and does radio reporting on immigration, race, and sexual politics. She has covered Texas for many years. Research assistance provided by Eleanore Catolico.

And she was busy without letup. She joined a historically black sorority, Sigma Gamma Rho, which emphasizes community service. She constantly volunteered for projects. She also helped LaVaughn Mosley, a middle-aged man at Prairie View who worked with students from poor families who had problems adjusting to college. Mosley was dazzled by Sandy's talent for counseling. He became her friend and mentor.

SANDY MAJORED IN WHAT PRAIRIE VIEW A&M calls "animal science." Sorority sister Ashley Gooden remembers Sandy often saying that she wanted to work for the Food and Drug Administration. But when she graduated, in 2009, there were few jobs open in animal science.

Unemployment that year was dire for everyone. The recession badly hurt young college graduates, but black grads had it worse, especially black women, who were more than twice as likely to be unemployed as white women. Overall, in 2010, one in five African Americans who'd just finished college couldn't get a job. Many who were lucky enough to be hired ended up in low-paid positions unrelated to their majors.

During her first months after graduation, Sandy got a job at Prairie View's Cooperative Extension Program as an office assistant. She commuted from Houston, where she was living with her boyfriend, a fellow Prairie View graduate and music-education major, who was also struggling to find work that matched his degree.

As she drove around Houston and Prairie View, Sandy was deluged with traffic tickets, fines, and court costs. Texas has no income tax, and the state, its counties, and its municipalities have to get the money from somewhere. One way is through traffic tickets, using a system similar to the one the Justice Department has criticized in Ferguson, Missouri. In Texas, extra charges are attached to the tickets, and they are staggering. There's a $25 "records management" fee, a $15 "judicial fund" fee, and $15 added to each bail-bond payment. The tickets themselves also include add-ons to fund a statewide program providing services for people with brain and spinal-cord injuries. Even Prairie View A&M's juvenile-justice school was funded with money from traffic tickets.

In 2009, Sandy received tickets for driving in Waller County without a seat belt, driving without liability insurance, and speeding. Her fines and costs totaled $876.50. The following year, she was cited in Houston for speeding and colliding with a vehicle. The court told her she owed $260, though she said she was unemployed. She didn't pay, and a warrant was issued for her arrest.

And then there was marijuana. In the Houston suburbs, Sandy was charged in 2009 with misdemeanor possession of a small amount. Her arrest was predictable: Nationally, one in five people her age were smoking marijuana in 2009, but people of color were especially likely to be criminally charged. In Harris County, which includes Houston, proportionately three times as many blacks as whites were being arrested and subjected to some of the harshest punishments in the country. Sandy faced prison time and a $4,000 fine. Her first year out of school was not going well.

DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Carl Anthony Moore is a Houston lawyer and Prairie View A&M alumnus. Sandy hired him to defend her, and he got the marijuana charge dropped and replaced with possession of "paraphernalia." The fine was $500 and no jail time.

But then, in May 2010, Sandy was again arrested in Houston, as she was driving home from a party after midnight. A sheriff's deputy said he noticed a car going too fast, with a bad headlight and the taillights out. He thought Sandy was drunk. She told him she didn't drink much because of her epilepsy, so the few drinks she'd had that night might have affected her more than they would other people. She took a Breathalyzer test; it came back barely above the legal limit. She was arrested anyway, for DUI. Later, when her car was impounded, the deputy found a small plastic bag with 1.4 grams of marijuana. That amount would barely have made three joints. In Texas, it was enough for another possession charge.

Moore again represented Sandy. This time, he got the DUI dropped. He thought he could successfully fight the marijuana charge, too, but Sandy told him not to try. She seemed demoralized and overwhelmed, Moore says, as though she was having trouble coping with the stress of the case—and with stress in general. She had earlier told him that she smoked marijuana daily, and he wondered if she was self-medicating. Moore didn't get a chance to explore further: She didn't have the money to pay for more of his services, so she pleaded guilty to the possession charge. Her sentence was 30 days in lockup.

Final drive: Sandra Bland (left) and her mother, Geneva Reed-Veal, shared a road trip just days before Bland's death.

THE HOUSTON AREA'S MAIN CORRECtional facility is the Harris County Jail, which houses around 9,000 inmates each day. It was, and is, notorious. A year before Sandy landed there, the Justice Department investigated the jail and found rampant civil-rights violations. Overcrowding was one. Fights were another. Dirty sheets, clothing, and mattresses were common. In the intake area, there were no toilets, only holes in the floor.

After doing her 30 days in these conditions, Sandy broke up with her boyfriend and returned to Illinois, to resume her job search and reunite with her family. But she was worried that the Texas warrant—for the speeding and collision fine she'd never paid—would haunt her when she tried to renew her license in Illinois.

So Sandy did what is known among Texas's poor as "sitting out" traffic tickets. The state lets people discharge their tickets with credit earned by serving time in jail. Sandy went back to the dirty, crowded, violent Harris County Jail and spent several days "paying" her ticket, earning $100 a day in credits.

After she was released, her Prairie View friend and mentor LaVaughn Mosley asked her how she'd managed. Sandy was all strength and bravado, giving him the impression that "it was nothing to her to sit out time" and that she'd done it "like a champ!"

Back in Illinois, she went from shitty job to shitty job. She worked some shifts at Portillo's, a hot-dog and milkshake café. She did a few days at McDonald's. She signed up with a temp agency. Sometimes she lived with her godmother, Dee Watts, and Dee's husband Lionel. Other times, she stayed with her sisters, watching their children. She felt boxed in, and went back and forth to Texas on buses. By 2013, she was in Illinois again, still without her own place to live and still working as a temp. She hoped these brief assignments would lead to a permanent hire. They never did. According to her tax returns, in 2013, four years out of school, she grossed less than $8,000.

By 2013, Sandy was in Illinois again, still without her own place and still working as a temp. She grossed less than $8,000 that year.

Her misdemeanors seem to have plagued her job search. In a later Facebook posting, she discussed a workshop about how to get one's criminal record expunged. She introduced the post with a quote, suggesting that she'd heard it during her own job interviews: "We think you are a great candidate, but based on your background…"

Her "background" got worse in Illinois. According to state data, black drivers in towns like Naperville, Lisle, and Villa Park are up to four and a half times more likely to be stopped for traffic violations than white drivers, and up to four times more likely to be searched. Fines collected from tickets are mostly put into county and township general funds. As in Texas, they operate like taxes on the poor.

In July 2013, Sandy got stopped in Naperville for speeding. She was also ticketed for driving without insurance and with a suspended registration and driver's license. Her fine came to over $4,000. She didn't appear at her court hearing. An arrest warrant was issued, and she spent a night in jail.

Sandy was bonded out by Lionel Watts, her godmother's husband, who recalls his wife's puzzlement that Sandy's mom hadn't paid the bond. Geneva Reed-Veal—her mom had gotten married—has acknowledged in recent press interviews that she and her daughter had long-standing conflicts. She and Sandy's sisters declined to speak with me on the record; what those conflicts were about, Reed-Veal has not said publicly. But according to Lionel, he and Dee became Sandy's economic fallback in this period, especially Dee. She transferred the title of her old Cadillac to Sandy. She opened a joint bank account with her. And she was Sandy's sounding board.

By 2014, Sandy owed thousands of dollars in tickets. Late one night in Naperville, she was arrested while driving with an inarguably high blood-alcohol level. As a one-time incident for a young adult, speeding and drunk driving might be deemed a sowing-one's-oats peccadillo—but with Sandy, they suggested emotional troubles.

Robert Lega, her childhood friend from church choir, was living in Chicago, and the two occasionally called each other to catch up. Sandy often told him about her problems finding work and being broke. And she told him she suffered from depression.

Hearing a friend talk about depression was unusual for Lega. Considering it as a medical condition deserving of treatment is not something black people generally do, he says. Instead, "It's like, 'Hey, man, if you've got problems, figure out a way to deal with them.'" Lega's observation is echoed by research and anecdotal evidence. A 2010 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 4 percent of African Americans report major depression, a significantly higher percentage than whites, at just over 3 percent. Still, while about 14 percent of the population in general sought treatment for depression in 2011, only about 8 percent of African Americans did. Black women have it even worse than black men: They

SANDRA BLAND / FACEBOOK

are among the most undertreated groups for depression in the nation.

One reason for the lack of treatment is that, even with Obamacare, many poor people still don't have health insurance. And even when they do have plans, many psychotherapists don't accept them.

Another is what several feminist researchers call "the myth of the Strong Black Woman." Sociologist Tamara Beauboeuf-LaFontant notes that white culture has never viewed black women as normatively feminine. Instead, slavery and Jim Crow assigned stereotypes: sharp-tongued Sapphires; big, asexual, all-giving Mammies; and fertile, Jezebel-like welfare queens. Today, another stereotype has arisen: the notion that extraordinary strength is a natural quality of black women.

After liberation, an emerging African-American women's-club movement tried to reconfigure the slavery-era idea that, as Zora Neale Hurston wrote in the 1930s, the black woman was the world's "mule." Instead, the movement took up the notion of "strong black womanhood" in service to the race. It tried to turn a contemptible stereotype likening black women to pack animals into one that celebrated their profound human dignity. But the new myth turned out to be a Faustian bargain: At least partly because of it, black women find it hard to talk about their suffering in a culture where racism and sexism continue to sap health and spirits.

Monica Coleman is a professor of African-American religion at Claremont College and a theologian ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal church, the same denomination as Sandy's. Coleman has struggled since adolescence with major depression and suicidal thoughts. She wants the black church to be a place where people like Sandy can go to give and get help with depression. But very few churches provide mental-health counseling, Coleman notes. Instead, they recommend casting out depression through prayer. "Faith can help," she says, "but it doesn't get rid of chemical imbalances or life stressors."

In 2014, according to Lionel Watts, Sandy got pregnant. Medical records indicate that it was an ectopic pregnancy. The condition occurs when a fertilized embryo implants in a fallopian tube rather than in the uterus. The result, usually experienced early in pregnancy, can be excruciating pain as well as the risk of a burst tube, internal bleeding, and death. Timely treatment usually saves the woman's life. But in the aftermath, there is a risk of additional ectopic pregnancies as well as permanent infertility. In all, ectopic pregnancy is harrowing.

Immediately after Sandy's death in July 2015, jail intake documents surfaced indicating that she had told the guards that she'd "lost a baby" a year earlier. Ectopic pregnancies are complicated medical experiences that most people don't fully understand. That may be why, when asked by reporters, one of Sandy's sisters said only that Sandy had "a miscarriage"—and that she had taken it in stride. But Sandy also reported that after she "lost a baby," she tried to commit suicide by taking pills. Her family said they knew nothing about this.

Sandy's godmother Dee Watts may have known. Her husband vaguely remembers Sandy seeming "sullen" and saying something to Dee about it. But Dee at the time had her own grave medical problems: She was terminally ill with cancer, and in July 2014—just weeks after Sandy's pregnancy—she died. Dee was the older woman that Sandy had leaned on, for money, a place to stay, and a sympathetic ear. Lionel went into mourning and says he didn't feel like having Sandy in the house anymore. He spoke with her much less often than when Dee was alive.

Black women are among the most undertreated groups for depression in the nation.

One of the last times Lionel saw Sandy was when she asked him for a ride to a job interview. He drove her to Cook's, a manufacturer and distributor of cookware and kitchen supplies, mostly for prisons. Sandy was hired as an administrative assistant. The job paid only $13.50 an hour, but it was the first steady job she'd had in years. Lionel was happy for her. Not long after, she told him she was living with an older man who worked at Cook's. An older man with steady employment, Lionel thought, would be good for Sandy.

Cook's is a family-run business with about 30 employees, most of them white. One job perk is the chance to appear in short YouTube videos that advertise Cook's products. Sandy starred in some. In one video, she bends a red spoon back and forth while touting its softness and the fact that "it cannot be easily sharpened into a weapon."

A few months after she was hired by Cook's, she saw *Selma* and started #SandySpeaks. She never posted on Facebook about her job, even though working there began to weigh on her as she became more politicized by the Black Lives Matter movement. "She had grown tired of helping 'the Man' generate profit off the backs and sweat of black people," Lega remembers her saying one evening as they ate dinner together. "I just can't do this anymore," she told him about working at Cook's. "It hurts my heart." But she desperately needed the income, not to mention the health insurance.

Sandy did not typically speak on Facebook about her misdemeanor record, her problems with money, or anything else personal and dark. But in early March, after two weeks of uncharacteristic silence, she finally offered a personal revelation: She was suffering from depression and PTSD. On that very day, she said, she had been crying. Her illness was "something that the African American culture likes to turn a blind eye to." Coping for her

Worn down: Sandra Bland stands before officials in the Texas jail where she died. She was placed in what was essentially solitary confinement.

was a daily struggle, against "nothing but the Devil."

In response to this confession, Sandy got no practical advice from her hundreds of Facebook followers, and barely any sympathy. There was a sad-face emoji, and one comment. "Depression sucks," it said.

Meanwhile, she found an outlet for her increasing political awareness. She was determined to help the Jackie Robinson West baseball team, a group of black boys who had won the 2014 Little League World Series, but had the title taken away after it was discovered that some of the boys didn't live in the team's catchment area. Sandy vowed to collect petitions calling for reinstatement of the trophy. She spent hours at suburban malls, asking shoppers for signatures. She was disappointed that, though black people sometimes stopped, almost all of the very few people who signed were white.

She continued to post links to articles about disturbing injustices against black people. As April went by, they focused increasingly on police shootings of unarmed young men. One day she put up her own slogan, in capital letters: AT FIRST THEY USED A NOOSE. NOW ALL THEY DO IS SHOOT. She posted an image of a young black man in close-up, his neck encircled by an American flag, knotted so as to kill him by hanging. She made the noose image her profile picture.

A few days later, she left Cook's—and became jobless and uninsured.

In June, she posted something else to Facebook about herself: "Walked into the house to a sink full of dishes. So I smashed a few plates (literally) to make myself feel better." "LOL," one response said.

On June 17, an armed white supremacist named Dylann Roof massacred nine black people during Bible study at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in South Carolina. Sandy immediately posted about the murders. At around this time, judging by a postmortem photograph of her inner left forearm, she seems to have cut herself repeatedly. The wounds were small, numerous, and neatly spaced. A bit of makeup, or a subtle turn of her forearm inward, would have easily made the cuts hard to see. Apparently, no one saw.

In late June, she called her old friend in Prairie View, LaVaughn Mosley. They had a long talk about her frustration and, as Mosley calls it, her desperation. Her feelings for the older man with whom she was living had diminished, even as he was getting more serious. The relationship had become one of convenience, a roof over her head. She had asked her mother if she could move in with her. She told Mosley that her mother had said she would think about it. Mosley urged Sandy to go onto the Prairie View A&M jobs website. She did, and found three positions. One was permanent, for someone with a college degree. Two were clerical and temporary, for just a few weeks that summer. She applied for all of them.

As she awaited replies, she drove with her mother to Tennessee over the July 4 weekend to visit family. According to her mom's account in a *Chicago* magazine profile, they spent the road trip discussing old tensions, to the constant sound of the gospel-music CDs that Sandy had brought, and attempting to rebuild their relationship.

On Wednesday, July 8, Mosley got another call from Sandy. Prairie View wanted to interview her the next day. Her mother still hadn't let her know if she could move in, and as Mosley recalls, she was at the end of her rope with DuPage County. "Fuck it—I'm going to Texas!" he remembers her saying. The following morning, he came home from a bicycle ride and found Sandy in his driveway. She had driven over 1,000 miles, nonstop, in 16 hours. According to Mosley, she had not told her boyfriend or kin that she was leaving.

She was at the end of her rope with DuPage County. "Fuck it—I'm going to Texas!" she told a friend.

An inadvertent icon: Bland's mug shot from her final arrest in Texas went viral after her death.

She took a shower and went, on no sleep, to the interview. She was hired for one of the temporary jobs. It paid $13.80 an hour and would be just four weeks long. Her hire letter warned that it was "contingent upon the clearance of a background check." Ecstatic nonetheless, Sandy called people to announce that she was hired. One of them was Mosley. He congratulated her and said she could stay with him until she got on her feet. He never saw her again.

The following afternoon, on Thursday, July 10, Sandy signed the papers for her job at Prairie View. She had just left that appointment when she was pulled over, brutalized, and arrested by Texas state trooper Brian Encinia.

At the county jail, Sandy told a Latino guard during intake that she had felt "very depressed" during the past year and that she felt that way at that moment. She added that she had tried to commit suicide in 2014 after losing her pregnancy ("a baby," the jailer wrote). She said she'd experienced the death of a loved one.

Her revelations—and they were very brave ones, made to a stranger and signaling a desire for help—brought her no assistance whatsoever. It's true that a little less than three hours after her intake, on a separate form, she contradicted herself and said she wasn't depressed, never had been, and hadn't thought of killing herself recently. Nonetheless, according to jail protocol, she should have been immediately seen by a mental-health professional and perhaps hospitalized—or, at the very least, put on suicide watch. None of these interventions happened. And, apparently, no one looked at her forearm.

She was charged with felony assault on a public servant and placed in a security cell that by chance was empty except for her. In effect, a very sociable young woman with signs of serious mental-health problems, and with a deep need to derive comfort from just being able to talk to someone, was thrown into solitary confinement.

Her cell phone was confiscated. Inmates are able to use a phone on the wall inside their cells, but only if each person they dial agrees to a $14.99 charge. They are instructed to pour water down the cell's floor drain every time they use the toilet. And they are ordered never to use the jail intercom except in an emergency.

On Saturday, Sandy's bond was set at $515, and she was allowed free calls from the booking desk. She contacted a sister who was hardly in a position to send $515, since she was being sued by her landlord for back rent, to the tune of more than $1,500. Mosley didn't have the bond money either; he told Sandy that he would raise it from his fraternity brothers. He started contacting them but felt little urgency—after all, Sandy had always told him that "sitting out" time in jail had been so easy for her. By Sunday, neither he nor her family had the bond money ready.

Sandy called no one from her cell. No one visited. She was a woman with a reputation for never crying—yet, according to the women in a nearby cell, she spent Sunday sobbing uncontrollably and saying, repeatedly, that being locked up was not a life she could deal with.

Who is HILLARY CLINTON?

Two Decades of Answers From the Left

INTRODUCTION BY KATHA POLLITT
EDITED BY RICHARD KREITNER

A MUST-READ FOR THE 2016 ELECTION SEASON

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On Monday, at about 6:30 AM, she refused breakfast. Just before 8 AM, she used the emergency-only intercom to beg a jail employee for more free calls from the front desk. He refused and said she needed to use the telephone in her cell. Two minutes later, she was on the intercom, making the same request. He again refused.

An hour later, she was found hanging from a bathroom privacy partition in her cell with a noose around her neck, fashioned from a plastic, jail-issue garbage bag. Her feet were touching the ground. The position is well known among coroners as being common in suicides, and quite effective for quickly causing death.

POSTMORTEM, PEOPLE OF ALL RACES MOURNED Sandy as they might a dead daughter or good friend. Memorials, hashtags, and protests erupted, along with complicated theories about her being murdered by her jailers (many of whom were Latino or black). Her family filed a lawsuit, charging that the jail and jailers didn't do what they should have done to prevent her from committing suicide. The defendants have responded to this eminently reasonable charge with stunning and stupefying cruelty, arguing that "Bland's decision to commit suicide was hers alone." Her family still doubts publicly that she killed herself, even as their own lawsuit suggests otherwise.

Since Sandy's death, discussion has grown about Black Lives Matter activists suffering from depression. They talk of being worn down and worn out by the constant microaggressions they suffer, and which they spend their lives fighting. One woman has talked of wanting to fire a gun to her head. MarShawn McCarrel, a 23-year-old from Columbus, Ohio, went beyond wanting: He fatally shot himself on the steps of his state's capitol, after posting on his Facebook page, "My demons won today. I'm sorry."

Amid the demons, everyone remembers the goodness of Sandy, especially a little boy who said goodbye to her. Eleven-year-old Taejon Washington lived in her apartment complex in DuPage County. He recalls a summer day when he and some friends discovered a game called the "Charlie Charlie Challenge," which had gone viral on YouTube. To play, you take a piece of paper and write YES/NO/NO/YES in a four-square grid, then balance one pencil precariously on top of another, crosswise, in the center of the grid. "Charlie, Charlie, are you here?" the players in these videos intone—and when the upper pencil swings to "Yes," they run away shrieking in gleeful terror.

Sandy approached Taejon and his friends. She had talked to them before, and they liked her. She'd been recording them with her phone; she said she wanted to document their lives. She told them they shouldn't play the game—it was about summoning demons, not Jesus. Taejon felt grateful. After they spoke, she said she was leaving for Texas. They waved, and she drove off.

Days later, Taejon saw the horrifying arrest video and heard how Sandy was found dead. He doesn't believe that she committed suicide. All he knows about her is that Sandy was the nice lady who gave him counsel and documented him with her cell phone. And as to the question #WhatHappenedtoSandraBland?, he knows that she was killed. ■

LIVES MATTER

ter the Hashtag?

by DANI McCLAIN

THE MOVEMENT IS MOST VISIBLE ON TWITTER, BUT ITS TRUE HOME IS SOMEWHERE ELSE.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANNIE ZHANG

IN MARCH 2012, NEARLY A MONTH AFTER George Zimmerman killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida, hundreds of high-school students in Miami-Dade and Broward counties staged walkouts to protest the fact that Zimmerman hadn't been arrested on any charges. A group of current and former Florida college activists knew that they had to do something too. During a series of conference calls, Umi Selah (then known as Phillip Agnew) and others in the group planned a 40-mile march from Daytona Beach to the headquarters of the Sanford Police Department—40 miles symbolizing the 40 days that Zimmerman had remained free. On Good Friday, 50 people set off for Sanford. The march culminated in a five-hour blockade of the Sanford PD's doors on Easter Monday. The marchers demanded Zimmerman's arrest and the police chief's firing. Within two days, both demands had been met.

A little over a year later, a jury found Zimmerman not guilty on charges of second-degree murder or manslaughter. Undeterred by the legal setback, the activists—calling themselves the Dream Defenders—showed up in Tallahassee and occupied the Florida statehouse for four weeks in an effort to push Republican Governor Rick Scott to call a special legislative session to review the state's "stand your ground" law, racial profiling, and school push-out policies, all of which the organization linked to Martin's death. Fueled in part by participants sharing updates on Twitter, the occupation became a national story, and Selah fielded a flood of requests from media and progressive organizations. Some wanted to give an award to the Dream Defenders; others wanted to add Selah to lists proclaim-

ing the arrival of a new generation of civil-rights heroes. (One writer said he embodied the spirit of Nelson Mandela.) Others wanted his perspective on the burgeoning racial-justice movement. After a while, Selah wanted none of it.

The breaking point came when a major news outlet profiled him without first conducting an interview. The result, he says, was an account that credited him with successes in social-justice movements he wasn't even involved in. "If I was a person in the [immigrants'-rights] movement, I would look at this article and think, 'Who the hell is this dude?'" he told me. "I really panicked. I imagined somebody saying, 'Why is this dude telling *Time* magazine that he's been in the forefront of these movements, and we've never seen him here?'"

Selah's response was to pull himself out of the spotlight. He started declining media requests and posting less often to social media. When he did accept an invitation to speak, his goals were to disavow any hero label thrust on him by others and to demystify the Dream Defenders' work.

Selah is an organizer, not a media personality, and so the trade-off made sense for him. But for others, that might not be the case. Twitter personality and trailing Baltimore mayoral candidate DeRay Mckesson was described in a recent *New York Times* profile as "the best-known face of the Black Lives Matter movement" and BLM's "biggest star." Now followed by more than 300,000 Twitter users, Mckesson began building his following by live-tweeting the protests in Ferguson in August 2014 after driving there from Minneapolis, where he lived at the time. More than a million mentions and retweets on the social-networking platform made him the protagonist of the *Times* magazine's cover story on Black Lives Matter and earned him a spot on *Fortune*'s World's Greatest Leaders list. But is he an organizer? The historian Barbara Ransby, author of *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement*, says she defines organizing as "bringing people together for sustained, coordinated, strategic action for change." Mckesson, who wisely calls himself a "protester," is doing something else entirely. The problem is that too many of us don't know to look for the difference.

> **"We're building the bicycle while riding it and being shot at."**
>
> —Ash-Lee Woodard Henderson, regional organizer for Project South

TODAY'S RACIAL-JUSTICE MOVEMENT DEMANDS an end to the disproportionate killing of black people by law-enforcement officials and vigilantes, and seeks to root out white supremacy wherever it lives. Social media has allowed its members to share documentary evidence of police abuse, spread activist messages, and forge a collective meaning out of heartrending news. At certain key moments, Twitter in particular has reflected and reinforced the power of this movement. On November 24, 2014, when the St. Louis County prosecutor announced that a grand jury had decided not to bring charges against the officer who killed an unarmed Michael Brown, Twitter users fired off 3.4 million tweets regarding the police killings of black people and racial-justice organizing, with the vast majority coming from movement supporters and news outlets, according to a recent report by American University's Center for Media and Social Impact. Weeks later, when the police officer who choked Eric Garner to death in New York City was also not indicted, 4.4 million tweets over a period of seven days kept the nation's attention focused on the fight for police accountability. Hashtags like #BlackLivesMatter, #Ferguson, #HandsUpDontShoot and #IfTheyGunnedMeDown gave users—including those not yet involved in activism—a way to contribute to conversations they cared about.

But while social media turns the microphone over to activists and organizers who are often far from the center of the media's attention, its power doesn't come without pitfalls. In August, a nasty Twitter fight erupted after Mckesson initiated a meeting with Bernie Sanders's campaign. Writer and activist dream hampton posted a tweet that read: "While a meeting with @deray might be a blast, I would expect @BernieSanders to meet with actual BLM folks, those who forced this platform." At the heart of the criticism was the claim that Mckesson was not in a position to speak to a presidential candidate on behalf of the Black Lives Matter network—an organization with chapters that grew out of the hashtag created and popularized by Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Khan-Cullors.

That distinction was lost on many of Mckesson's followers. For them, he was a reliable voice: at times a source of first-person accounts of the protests, at others a consistent and inspiring source of commentary on the issues they cared about. The difference between an organization called Black Lives Matter and a movement that had come to be known by the same name was, to many, negligible and a distraction from the real story: a young black man who was saying the right things on Twitter would be meeting with a presidential candidate.

But for someone like hampton or Selah, the stakes were much higher. "The people who the liberal media and social media have elevated to the position of national leader or spokesperson do not share the values of the movement," Selah told me. "The ideas that they put forth, the platforms that they put forth, are neoliberal and do not come from a rooting in movement, don't come from a liberation framework, from an abolition framework." (Mckesson declined repeated requests for an interview for this story.)

So what are the values of the movement? Who is spreading them—and how? Charlene Carruthers, national director of Black Youth Project 100, has been engaged with those questions for more than a decade. While an undergraduate at Illinois Wesleyan University, she was active in the Black Student Union. She worked on campaigns in support of young black candidates while getting her master's degree in social work in St. Louis. After she graduated, she joined the staff at an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation in Virginia and managed online campaigns at the civil-rights organization ColorofChange. (Full disclosure: She and I were colleagues there.)

Since July 2013, when Zimmerman was acquitted, Carruthers has helped build BYP 100, a youth-led organization made up of people between the ages of 18 and 35. BYP 100 has developed a democratic decision-making process and operates from what Carruthers calls a "young black queer feminist" perspective. The group now has an estimated 300 members nationwide and chapters in Chicago, New Orleans, Detroit, Oakland, and Washington, DC. Its work in Chicago has drawn the most attention: In response to the police killing of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald and the killing of 22-year-old Rekia Boyd by an off-duty officer, BYP 100 organized protests and marches that played a key role in the firing of Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy in late 2015. A recent *Chicago* magazine article declared the chapter "the most vocal and arguably most effective activist group in town." How did they get there? Carruthers explains: "We recruit. We

Defending the dream: After Trayvon Martin's death, Umi Selah led a 40-mile march to the headquarters of the Sanford Police Department.

LEFT, TOP: PHIL SEARS / AP

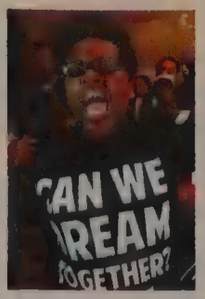
Dani McClain is a contributing writer for The Nation *and a fellow at the Nation Institute.*

do trainings. We do campaign work. That's the slow, hard work of organizing. Building a base is what we do."

Writing for Truth Out, organizer Ejeris Dixon—who has worked with the New York City Anti-Violence Project and the Audre Lorde Project—describes base-building as, at heart, relationship-building: "a series of activities designed to introduce, engage, and keep people involved in our movements. That means meeting individuals where they are and building forward from that place—the barbershop, the salon, the laundromat, the doorway—where we come together as people and have a conversation." The Movement for Black Lives policy table, which grew out of a national gathering of activists at Cleveland State University last summer, recently set out to do just that. In January, the policy table announced the start of a six-month process to develop a national agenda. Ash-Lee Woodard Henderson, a regional organizer with Project South, is a participant. She says she feels the pressure of developing a vision and creating infrastructure while responding to the seemingly endless killings of black people by police: "We're building the bicycle while riding it and being shot at."

Henderson's background, like Carruthers's, shows deep connections to earlier iterations of the black-liberation movement in the United States. "My mom is an original Black Panther Party member, and my father was very big in the Black Arts Movement in Tennessee and also in the black radio scene," Henderson says. When a 66-year-old black man named Wadie Suttles died in custody at the Chattanooga jail in 1983, her father took the bold step of naming the police officer suspected of the fatal beating on the air. In 2004, Henderson met veterans of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference when she took a monthlong bus ride with other young activists to register voters and commemorate Freedom Summer.

Among the current organizers, evidence of such long-standing commitment to racial justice is common, notes Barbara Ransby. Many leaders are taking the skills developed in labor or prison or community organizing and applying them to new collaborations. "Oftentimes we don't do that genealogy, and a new organization feels like it came out of the blue," she said. "There were new formations, but they were not newly formed organizers."



The next generation: Charlene Carruthers helped build BYP 100, a youth-led organization that now has 300 members nationwide.

"The work we have to do doesn't necessarily lend itself to 140 characters."

—Rachel Gilmer, a member of the Dream Defenders

No surrender: BYP 100 members protested at the conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, held in Chicago in October 2015.

WHAT IS NEW, AT LEAST FOR MANY, IS THE space for explicitly black organizing undertaken by activists tied to black communities. Makani Themba, a longtime organizer and founding director of the Praxis Project, explains that in the 1960s, the leaders of the movement were the heads of black institutions with sizable bases—think Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Ella Baker, Stokely Carmichael. That changed in '70s and '80s, as black leadership came to mean "the most deeply penetrated black person in white or mainstream institutions," Themba adds. As civil-rights organizations began to depend more on corporate contributions than member donations, and as Reagan-era cuts decimated organizations serving the black poor, black activists who wanted organizing and advocacy jobs turned to the institutions that had the resources to pay and retain them—often unions and economic-justice organizations that operated outside any explicitly black cultural context.

That pattern has shifted in recent years. The phrase "unapologetically black" appears on T-shirts and hoodies worn by movement activists, and a dedication to using messages appealing to black audiences dominates today's approach to racial-justice organizing. New groups like BYP 100, the Dream Defenders, and Black Lives Matter have blossomed in the wake of Zimmerman's acquittal. Denise Perry directs Black Organizing for Leadership & Dignity, whose stated mission is to "help rebuild Black social justice infrastructure...and re-center Black leadership in the US social justice movement." BOLD launched in 2011 and graduated its first class of trainees the following year. Perry says that the focus on black organizing was new for a majority of participants. "Many of them were organizing in multiracial, multiethnic organizations. That work is important; we're not going to win on our own. But the space to have conversations about what we need to work on was new for 98 percent of the people in the room."

AFTER THE DREAM DEFENDERS' SUCCESSFUL occupation of the Florida statehouse in 2013, its members were tempted to focus on actions that would satisfy a Twitter following that had jumped from about 4,000 to more than 30,000 in a month's time. But the work of organizing "has to be done," says Rachel Gilmer, 28, who became a staffer last summer, "and it doesn't necessarily lend itself to 140 characters that are going to get retweeted thousands of times."

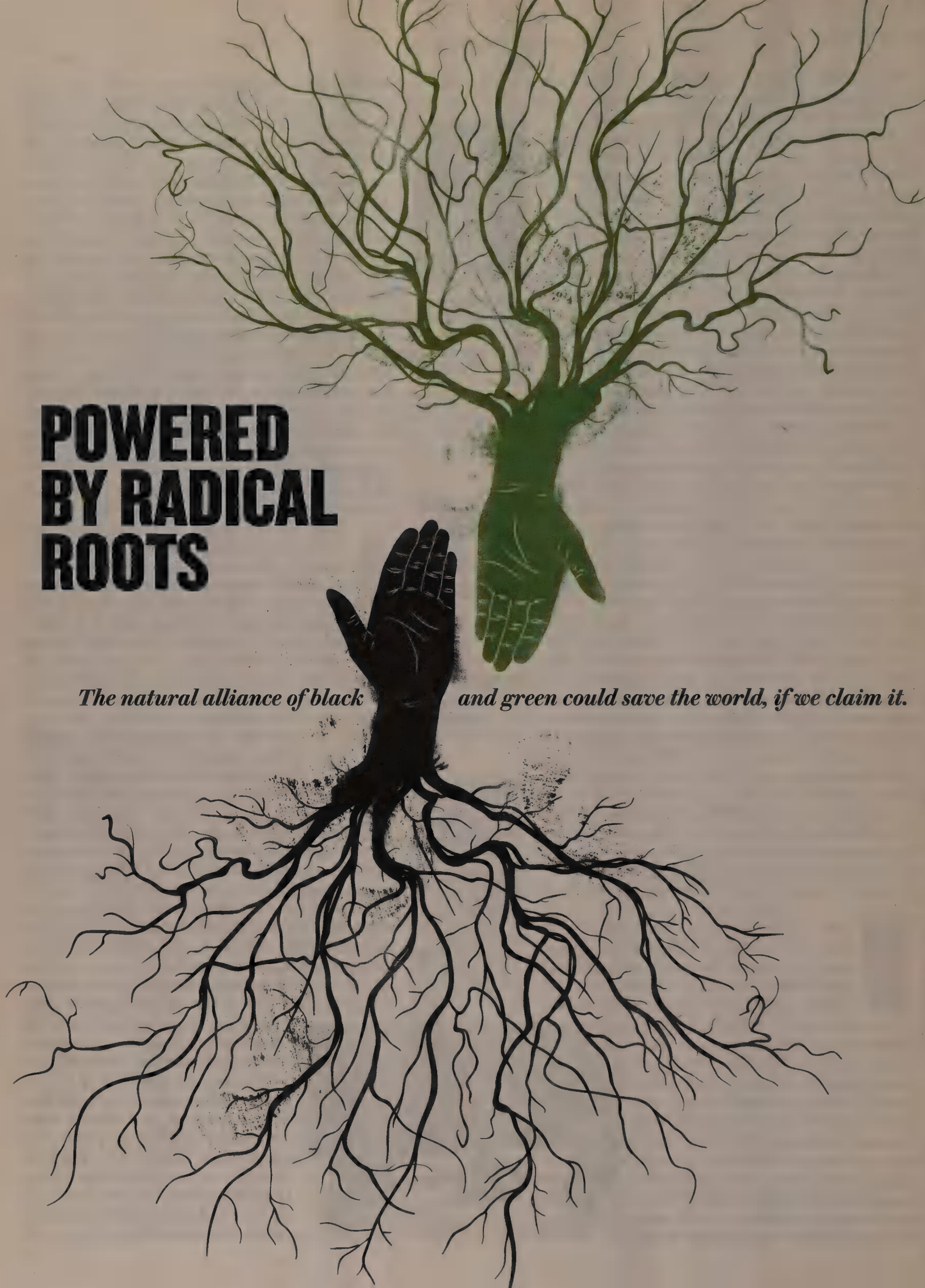
In the end, the commitment to building local campaigns won out over the lure of high visibility. The organization, which has eight chapters in Florida, is now in the midst of a yearlong effort to determine its long-term strategy, regardless of the ebbs and flows created by social-media buzz. Last fall, the group put a three-month moratorium on social media, which strengthened relationships and built trust among colleagues, Gilmer says. "It was an opportunity for us to take a break from all the noise in order to get back connected with one another."

It also forced a reality check about relationships in the movement. "We're like 'Hey, fam!' [online], but people don't really know each other," Gilmer says. "There's no substitute for human interaction."

Twitter feeds constantly updated with smart observations about the latest cause for outrage are a lot more visible than the painstaking meetings that precede a transit-system shutdown, a citywide protest, or a collaboratively written 40-page policy agenda. But understanding the distinction between organizers and amplifiers matters; otherwise, we'll overrate those who excel at amplifying the passion of a movement and undervalue the organizers, who make concrete change happen. Or as Henderson puts it: "The press doesn't tell me who the leaders of particular movements are—communities do." ■

RIGHT: COURTESY OF BYP 100

POWERED BY RADICAL ROOTS



The natural alliance of black and green could save the world, if we claim it.

by JAMES GUSTAVE SPETH and J. PHILLIP THOMPSON III

A BEAUTIFUL THING IS HAPPENING: ADVOCATES FOR RACIAL JUSTICE and for environmental protection—too often, movements quite distant from each other—are coming together in a new way. One can see it in the campaign of National People's Action and the Climate Justice Alliance for a just and locally empowering transition to clean energy; in the New Economy Coalition's inclusive membership and commitment to frontline communities; and in the projects of the Evergreen Cooperatives, in inner-city Cleveland. These new efforts (may they multiply!) are grounded on a strong foundation. When one explores the roots of both the environmental and civil-rights movements, one finds a strikingly similar radical critique. Both movements have called for a deep restructuring of society and the economy; in both cases, that call was based on an affirmation of life and the devoted care that life requires of us.

There is urgency in this fusing. Environmentalists must confront a haunting paradox. Our environmental organizations have grown ever stronger, more sophisticated, and better funded, winning many battles along the way. Yet, 46 years after the first Earth Day, we find ourselves on the cusp of a ruined planet. Climate change is bearing down on us, with dire consequences that disproportionately impact the poor. Around the world, we are losing biodiversity, forests, fisheries, and agricultural soils at a frightening rate. Fresh-water shortages multiply; toxins accumulate. It's time for a new environmentalism.

One can begin by asking: What is an environmental issue? We'd say that an environmental issue is any issue that affects environmental performance. When framed that way, environmental issues must include our failing political system and the erosion of democracy; the pervasive economic insecurity that paralyzes political action; and the materialistic, racially divisive, and completely anthropocentric values that dominate our culture. Environmental degradation is also driven by the triple imperatives of GDP growth at almost any cost, sustained corporate profits, and the projection of national power around the world.

These are among the root causes of our environmental decline, and if American environmentalists hope to ever succeed, we must find ways to address them. Ecologist Barry Commoner was not alone in asking, in his 1971 best seller *The Closing Circle*, whether the operational requirements of the capitalist system are compatible with ecological imperatives. Commoner's answer was no: If we do the right things for the environment, he argued, it's difficult to see how today's economic system could continue to operate, as dependent as it is on accumulation and growth.

Ideas like these motivated many of us as we set out to build the modern environmental movement. Reviving these ideas will require a politics that reasserts the ascendancy of people power over money power. Rebuilding people power requires a fusion of progressive efforts, which means that progressives of all stripes must come out of our individual silos to build an unprecedented social movement.

The subjugation of nature and its life creates the pretext for the subjugation of human beings.

MANY OF US WHO TOOK UP THE ENVIRONMENTAL cause in the late 1960s drew our primary inspiration from America's black community and its struggle for civil rights. We'd entered college when the civil-rights movement was in full swing. The movement had taught us that activism could succeed, that government could succeed, that wrongs could be righted.

A great tragedy, looking back, is that the booming environmental movement of the 1970s didn't build on this civil-rights connection. Instead of forging relationships with communities of color, our movement became—for a long period—a movement composed heavily of middle-class whites. The more recent emphasis on environmental justice has helped build a bridge between environmentalists and communities of color. But the environmental and racial-justice movements remain distant, without major dialogue between them. In a world where there is a premium on a melding of progressive forces, this situation is doubly unfortunate.

As in the environmental world, many in the black community are seeing limits to traditional advocacy. Achieving equal legal rights has enabled a small black upper-middle class to prosper, but it hasn't prevented a widening wealth gap. Nor has it prevented the reemergence of a two-tiered educational system or the mass criminalization of black youth. Faced with this realization, a number of black leaders, from grassroots organizers (such as those involved with Black Lives Matter and the Moral Mondays movement) to scholars, are calling for a rediscovery and revitalization of the civil-rights movement's radical roots to address the deeper structural issues that America confronts.

The modern civil-rights movement had its origins in black advocacy before the Civil War, when radical activists called for a fundamental reordering of American society, beginning with its values. Martin Luther King Jr. turned increasingly to these broader issues in his later years. In 1967, noting the 40 million Americans living in poverty, he said, "We are called upon to help the discouraged beggars in life's marketplace. But one day we must come to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring."

There is something profoundly hopeful in these calls to rediscover the civil-rights movement's radical roots. The best traditions of the environmental and racial-justice movements are very much aligned. Both see the origin of our country's problems in the system as a whole: in capitalism and the values and institutions that support it. The operating system by which we live and work is programmed for the wrong results, and it needs to be reprogrammed so that it genuinely sustains and restores human and natural communities. This task is daunting, but it is also rich with opportunity as a powerful basis for dialogue and collaboration.

And there's an even deeper and more profound set of considerations that unite black and green. Early crusaders for black freedom took special aim at the worldview and values that enabled a rapacious form of capitalism—the slave system—to emerge and flourish. Unlike later theories of socialism, which focused blame for economic inequality and racial divisions on economic self-interest and the power differentials between classes, advocates like

James Gustave Speth cochairs the Next System Project at the Democracy Collaborative and serves on the board of the New Economy Coalition. J. Phillip Thompson III is an associate professor of urban planning and politics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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The longtime Cuba correspondent for *The Nation*, Peter Kornbluh, is Cuba analyst at the National Security Archive in Washington, DC. He is the author of *Bay of Pigs Declassified*, co-author of *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*, and co-author of the recently published *Back Channel to Cuba: The Hidden History of Negotiations Between Washington and Cuba*, chosen by *Foreign Affairs* as Best Book of the Year.

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Sarah Grimké and Frederick Douglass emphasized the cultural origins of inequality and oppression—in precapitalist religion, in philosophy, and in social attitudes and prejudices. They held that there could not be a fundamental change in the economic or social system without a simultaneous revolution in deeply held values. Much later, King would revive the call for "a radical revolution of values." He spoke with clarity about what was at stake: "We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing-oriented' society to a 'person-oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and extreme militarism are incapable of being conquered."

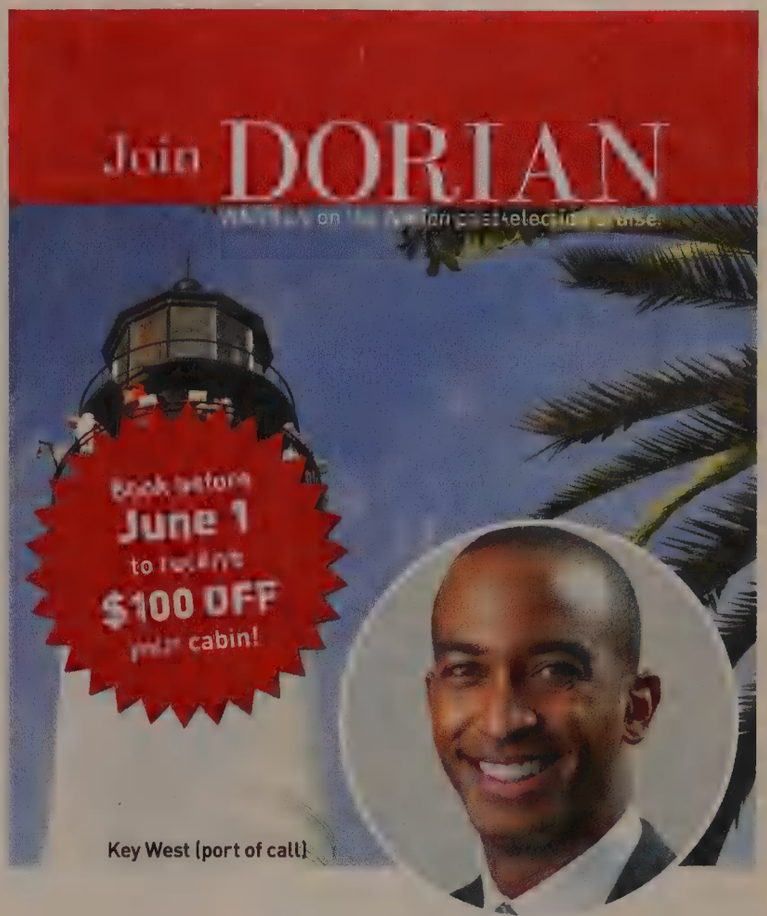
For King, "other-preservation is the first law of life. It is the first law of life precisely because we cannot preserve self without being concerned about preserving other selves." He was referring to other humans, whereas for environmentalists, nature is the "other" about which we must be concerned. Yet these two imperatives are ineluctably intertwined. The subjugation of nature and its life creates the pretext for the subjugation of human beings.

The environmental movement criticizes the separation of human beings from the natural world and the treatment of nature as existing to serve human ends. This separation has strong roots in the Western tradition, from Aristotle to the Bible. The cultural historian Thomas Berry has described the European colonization of North America as "a clash between the most anthropocentric culture that history has ever known with one of the most nature-centric cultures ever known." European settlers in the Americas made a major distinction between themselves, whom they declared were created in God's image, and indigenous peoples and Africans, whom they regarded as less than fully human. The escaped slave and abolitionist revolutionary Henry Highland Garnet, addressing a black audience in 1848, said, "Brethren, your oppressors... endeavor to make you as much like brutes as possible."

This attitude of control and dominion over "soulless" matter and animals, including "inferior" nonwhites, is an evil embedded deeply in the culture of modern society. It also haunts and weakens our democracy. Absent genuine solidarity across racial groups, democracy can easily degenerate into a tyranny of the majority, as it has for much of American history. Unless we counter the white-supremacist attitude of control and domination over both nature and nonwhite others, the cross-racial solidarity we need in order to deepen democracy, change the economy, and save the environment will continue to elude us.

Civil-rights activists are fond of saying that all human destiny is intertwined. What many indigenous philosophies teach is that the destiny of *all* life is intertwined. In 1977, the elders of the Iroquois Confederacy issued a remarkable statement, "Basic Call to Consciousness: Address to the Western World," in which they declared: "The destruction of the Native cultures and people is the same process which has destroyed and is destroying life on this planet.... The people who are living on this planet need to break with the narrow concept of human liberation, and begin to see liberation as something which needs to be extended to the whole of the Natural World."

How do we overcome our tragic legacy of subordinating nature to humans and humans to other humans? Surely one step is to see this historical pattern for what it is: the product of profound arrogance. Love, care, respect—we owe these to each other and to the natural world, and their common wellspring is an attitude of the heart, an abiding humility, awe, and reverence in the face of life's wondrous creations: the very opposite of arrogance. ■



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INTERNET: Selections from the current issue become available Thursday morning at TheNation.com.
Printed on 100% recycled 40% post-consumer acid- and chlorine-free paper, in the USA.

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(continued from page 2)

this in a leading case back in 1952. Thankfully, the German judiciary is more sociopolitically literate than some German journalists. Justice, not vengeance, must be the goal in a liberal and civilized society.

MICHAEL PFEIFFER
NEUHAUSEN AUF DEN FILDERN, GERMANY

Not-So-Ancient History

In light of the virulent anti-immigrant sentiment widespread in the United States these days, the reminder in the March 28/April 4 issue of Thomas Nast's 19th-century anti-Catholic cartoons is more than welcome ["Papist Invasion"]. As a scholar of American Catholicism, I have on more than one occasion reminded others of the similarities between current anti-immigrant discourse and Nast's portrayal of Catholic bishops as salivating crocodiles coming ashore to consume American youth.

But I can't help also being amused by the appearance of this sidebar in *The Nation*, since, in the late 1940s, *The Nation* itself published a series of ferociously anti-Catholic articles by an associate editor, Paul Blanshard. The articles were later published in book form as the best-selling *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. As Philip Jenkins, by no means a Catholic advocate, observes in his 2003 book *The New Anti-Catholicism*, "While Blanshard does not conjure up crocodilian Catholic bishops, the image is certainly implied."

It sometimes surprises me that I, an Irish-American Catholic, am such a dedicated reader of *The Nation*. And I imagine your Nast sidebar has Paul Blanshard turning over in his grave.

MARIAN RONAN
NEW YORK CITY

Many Bites of the Apple?

Re "Apple Is Right to Challenge the FBI" [March 14]: In 1994, I retired from my post as the chief of the computer and communications security office of the Defense Logistics Agency. In the summer before my exit, I attended a conference in which one of the presentations analyzed the recent development of a practically unbreakable encryption system. The FBI had already realized that this breakthrough would inhibit its ability to read other people's mail. The presenter was, ironically, interrupted when someone came into the room to give us security folks some bad news. The FBI had just then released a demand that any device implementing this unbreakable encryption method include a Law Enforcement Access Facility—LEAF, they called it. We were interested in making communications secure, and we knew—from experience—that anything designed by men could be compromised by men. This was an open issue when I retired. Nothing much is new about anything.

FRANK DIXON
MADISON, VA.

Justice Still Denied

Tim Atkins deserves adequate compensation ["Exonerated but Still Judged," March 28/April 4]. Even $30,000 a year for 30 years would be inadequate.

CHARLOTTE E. EDWARDS

Correction

In "PATH of Glory" [April 25/May 2], Michael Sorkin wrote that the steel used in the new World Trade Center transportation hub "weighs in at an astonishing 15,250 tons" and attributed this figure to *The New York Times*. In fact, the source for that figure was architect Santiago Calatrava's firm.

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Carafe and Candlestick (1909), by Pablo Picasso.

Just One More Stroke!

by BARRY SCHWABSKY

In his recent book *Dividuum*, the philosopher Gerald Raunig hypothesizes that current technology offers the possibility of a new "type of interactive and activating writing." Raunig imagines a future in which data about reading is harvested from e-book readers to "recursively affect the production of books, of texts altogether." Writers would be required to revise, abridge, or otherwise recast their now perpetually unfinished books in accordance with data about the "democratically" determined preferences of readers. All books would be crowdsourced, and writers would become the slaves of "an endless feedback loop and chain of ever new versions." The modernist idea of "the open art work," Raunig warns, could become a "Sisyphean nightmare."

What Raunig envisions is a far cry from the "definitively unfinished" works that we're familiar with from history. On the one hand, there are those that have come down to us in an unpolished or fragmentary state—because of, say, the artist's untimely death, their inability to envision a way to proceed past a certain point, or simply the intervention of chance. On the other hand, there are works that are deliberately unfinished or unfinishable, including all instances of what Umberto Eco characterized as "the open work" in his 1962 classic of the same name—works whose very structure depends on indeterminacy, most obviously the aleatoric music of Karlheinz Stockhausen or Luciano Berio. (Strangely, Eco doesn't mention John Cage.)

Other art forms have their own variants, such as Nanni Balestrini's novel *Tristano*, in which the order of the text varies in every printed copy—its publishers claim there are 109,027,350,432,000 possible variations—or Stan Douglas's video *Journey Into Fear* (2001), in which a 15-minute film loop is synched to bits of dialogue that are scrambled and recombined by a computer in combinations that play out for more than six consecutive days. Such works may not be literally infinite in scope, but no one reader could ever experience all their various instantiations. They

evoke what might be called a kind of mathematical sublime, to borrow Kant's phrase.

The question of finish was crucial to the emergence of modernism. The gauntlet was first thrown down by Manet, whose works in the 1860s were declared by critics to be unfinished—in fact, not even paintings but mere sketches. Similarly, a few years later, Whistler was accused by the Victorian sage himself, John Ruskin, of doing nothing more than "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." But Baudelaire had already anticipated the howls of Manet's and Whistler's denigrators when he observed, in 1845, "that in general what is 'completed' is not 'finished' and that a thing 'finished' in detail may well lack the unity of the 'completed' thing." From Manet and Whistler (or, indeed, from their predecessor Corot, who was the object of Baudelaire's defense) until today, artistic modernism has been inseparable from the critique of finish. And this change in painting and sculpture occurred in tandem with similar developments in the other arts. Consider the difference, for example, between the omniscient narrator of the high Victorian novel and Flaubert's *style indirect libre*, which depends on the reader making implicit connections and intuiting unmarked shifts in viewpoint; or, in the 20th century, the rejection by modernist architects of ornament—which had long been considered indispensable to a building's finish—as something that, as August Perret remarked, "generally conceals a defect in construction."

For all that, the force of the unfinished was far from a discovery of the 19th century, as Kelly Baum and Andrea Bayer point out in the catalog for "Unfinished: Thoughts Left Visible," the exhibition they've curated with Sheena Wagstaff at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (The exhibition, with which the museum has inaugurated its tenancy of the former Whitney Museum of American Art—henceforth to be known as the Met Breuer after its architect, Marcel Breuer—is on view through September 4.) They cite the Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, who observed in the first century "that the last works of artists and their unfinished pictures…are more admired than those which they finished, because in them are seen the preliminary drawings left visible and the artists' actual thoughts."

The evident congruence across the centuries between Pliny and Baudelaire suggests that, at least in its origins, modernism was the outbreak of a sensibility that had already flourished in various times and places. In the 19th century, it was called "art for art's sake," and it involved not only a commitment to art as such rather than the various instrumental purposes to which it is normally put, but also a recognition that what counts is the artist's conception of a work, which generates criteria that are incommensurable with putatively objective standards. (It's no accident that the two artists who have always been taken to exemplify the Renaissance notion of genius, Leonardo and Michelangelo, are precisely the ones who left the greatest number of unfinished projects.) For this reason, one can understand why the Met's curators have divided their exhibition into two parts—before and after the onset of modernism—though it's odd that they draw the line at the beginning of the 20th century rather than the middle of the 19th, when the recurring engagement with the unfinished became a conviction.

The irony, though, is that it's the pre- and early-modernist portions of the exhibition that are its real draw. Along with gems from its own collection—among them Albrecht Dürer's *Salvator Mundi* (ca. 1505) and El Greco's *The Vision of St. John* (ca. 1608–14)—the Met has been able to call in some extraordinary loans: Jan van Eyck's *Saint Barbara* (1437), from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp; Titian's *Portrait of Pietro Aretino* (1545), from the Palazzo Pitti in Florence; Jacques Louis David's *The Death of Bara* (1794), from the Musée Calvet, Avignon; a whole raft of late Turners from the Tate, London; Edgar Degas's *The Fallen Jockey* (1866/1880–81/1897), from the National Gallery in Washington, DC; and Willem de Kooning's *Woman, I* (1950–52), from MoMA. These are among the works that have provided the most fuel for the ever-unfinished debate about the meaning of distinctions like "finished" and "unfinished," or "finished" and "completed."

Probably the most dazzling of the loans, though, is the first thing you see when the third-floor elevators open onto the show: Titian's *The Flaying of Marsyas* (ca. 1570s). I am surprised there hasn't been more buzz, because the painting is, after all, one of the strangest and most extraordinary in history. The first time it was shown in this country, in 1986, the National Gallery became a site of pilgrimage for painters who had never expected to be able to see it in person. (The painting belongs to the Olomouc Museum of Art in Kromeriz, Czech Republic, from which it has traveled only twice in its more than 300 years there.) In Greek mythology, Marsyas was a satyr who, having challenged Apollo to a musical competition—what jazz musicians used to call a "cutting contest"—and lost, is flayed alive as punishment for his hubris. Titian's treatment of the subject somehow manages to present the cruelty and horror of the satyr's torture not just unflinchingly, but with a kind of eerie serenity. That this is in some fashion an allegory of art is suggested by the way the god of light handles his knife so delicately, like a pencil or brush. The painting's surface, with its subtle transitions from rough and seemingly hasty passages to ones of great refinement, appears to echo the unresolvable dualities of its subject. You'd almost think blood was part of the alchemy of its pigments.

David Bomford, in his contribution to the Met's exhibition catalog, might as well be crediting Titian with the inauguration of modernism when he writes that the great Venetian, "in his late works, effectively authorized a whole new aesthetic in European art, in which a sketchlike technique and painterly brushwork fundamentally redefined what constituted a finished painting." If Bomford is right, then so was the 19th-century critic Jules Castagnary in maintaining that the Impressionists did not invent the aesthetic of the unfinished. Instead, "They extoll it, they exalt it, they elevate it to a system, they turn it into the keystone of art, they place it on a pedestal and worship it; that's all."

As the catalog points out, it remains unclear whether Titian considered *The Flaying of Marsyas* unfinished. The situation of a work like his *Aretino* portrait is something else again: The sitter himself may have complained of its sketchiness, but it was a deliberate choice on Titian's part—the *non finito* was a recognized stylistic trope, a way of evoking a sense of boldness, energy, and brilliance. What sets the 20th- and 21st-century portions of "Unfinished" apart from the earlier ones is that cases of doubt, like those occasioned by *Marsyas*, become rarer, especially as the exhibition inches closer to the present. Baum identifies four forms in which the unfinished manifests itself in post–World War II art: the provisional (e.g., de Kooning's *Woman, I*, in which the work, in principle, could have been continued but was cut off); the infinite (among them works in series that could have been extended indefinitely, such as Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Net* paintings of the late 1950s and early '60s); the entropic (works that somehow incorporate their own decay or ruin, such as Robert Smithson's 1969–70 *Mirrors and Shelly Sand*, which loses some of its matter every time it's shown and then packed up); and the participatory (works that have to be activated and therefore to some degree remade, such as Hélio Oiticica's *Bólides*, 1965–66). All of these, except perhaps the first, are developments of the *non finito* as a stylistic option rather than the more troubling phenomenon of the work that was not and perhaps could not have been finished.

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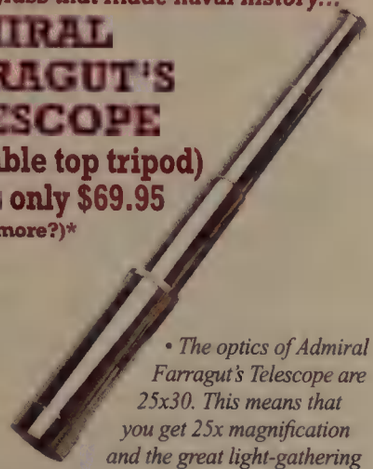

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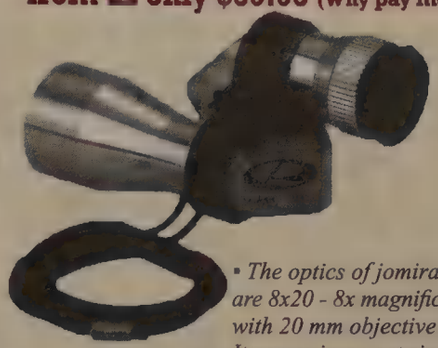

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Such truly unfinished works are rare in the second act of "Unfinished," as are those whose status is ambiguous, where it's unclear whether they were finished or not—as in the case of the van Eyck *Saint Barbara* or some of the Turners—or are obviously incomplete yet somehow unaccountably powerful, leaving viewers in doubt as to how they could have possibly been brought to any greater degree of completion. These are the cases in which art presents the problem of finish as an irresolvable epistemological question. True, something similar could be argued for many of the modern works. Diana Widmaier Picasso, the art historian who is also the painter's granddaughter, asks in her catalog essay about his works: "Since interpretation is central to our perception of *non finito*, how are we to discern whether or not the artist deliberately suspended a work in a state of incompletion in order to produce an effect?" It's true that the impulsive nature of Picasso's approach to art meant that he could always change his mind about a work that had not yet left his possession—but precisely because his style assumes the legitimacy of the unfinished, it's usually pretty evident that his use of it is calculated. With Picasso, as with the artists who succeeded him, the question is rarely whether he deliberately stopped his work at a given point, but rather *why*: What did he see that satisfied him enough to stop? Likewise with de Kooning, whose wife Elaine recalled: "On any given canvas, I saw hundreds of images go by. I mean, paintings that were masterpieces. I would come in at night and find they had all been painted away." What was de Kooning looking for through this relentless making and unmaking? One can no more put it into words than he did, but to understand his art, one has to form an intuition about what it was he was trying to glimpse.

By the 1960s, though, the method of doubt cultivated by Abstract Expressionists like de Kooning, their cult of improvisation and revision, had started to seem a stale cliché to many of their younger counterparts—those who would become Pop artists, Minimalists, and Conceptualists. As Sol LeWitt wrote in his "Sentences on Conceptual Art" (1969): "Irrational thoughts should be followed absolutely and logically.... If the artist changes his mind midway through the execution of the piece he compromises the result and repeats past results." Furthermore, "Once the idea of the piece is established in the artist's mind and the final form is decided, the process is carried out blindly.... The process is mechanical and should not be tampered with. It should run its course." But what LeWitt proposed was far from a return to classical notions of finish, since the works generated by his systematic pursuit of intuition amount to what Rosalind Krauss once called an "immense spectacle of the irrational"—an outrage to meaning, at once blank and excessive. Compared with this, the curators' suggestion that the point of LeWitt's *Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes* (1974/82) is mainly how the viewer "mentally reconstructs the missing edges and 'infers the unknown by clues from the known'" seems tame.

Just as the modernist sense of provisionality eventually became a game familiar enough to play well without conviction, so too did postmodern infinity, entropy, and participation. That's certainly the feeling I get from works like Tatsuo Miyajima's light installation *Arrow of Time (Unfinished Life)*. But perhaps a complacency about the unfinished has been hardwired into contemporary work ever since artists succeeded in overthrowing the authority of the salons and academies and installing the idea that every artist is his or her own authority. I can't help thinking of Robert Rauschenberg's 1961 *Portrait of Iris Clert*, which really should have been included here. The work is the telegrammed statement "THIS IS A PORTRAIT OF IRIS CLERT IF I SAY SO." Although Rauschenberg left himself a curious out—he doesn't say if he *does* say so—the artist's fiat is presented as the magic formula that forecloses all skepticism. I prefer de Kooning's self-questioning, which preserves an enigma: The matter of whether the artist has fulfilled his intention remains ambiguous, and so does the intention itself.

Miyajima—along with Kusama—is one of just two Asian artists included in the exhibition. And there are no artists from Africa (with the exception of the South African–born Marlene Dumas, whose professional life has been in the Netherlands). If the Met really wanted to show what it could do with a new space for temporary exhibitions beyond the boundaries of its established departments, then limiting "Unfinished" to art from Europe and the Americas represents a huge lost opportunity. Classical Asian art—for example, Chinese literati painting, or those scholar's rocks that only become artworks in the eyes of the prepared observer (although in some instances they may be subtly "enhanced" by an understated human intervention)—gives tremendous emphasis to what is left unpainted, unworked. A comparative, cross-cultural examination of the differing ideas of "finish" and the "unfinished" over the centuries would have been a tremendous contribution to knowledge.

By chance, a small exhibition on the same theme was mounted last summer at the Courtauld Gallery in London. Among the works included—all from the gallery's collection—was a Monet *Vase of Flowers*, dated 1881–82. But perhaps the dating should be more open-ended. According to Karen Serres, the curator of the Courtauld show, Monet expressed his dissatisfaction with the painting in the painting itself: "He just cannot express the light falling on the flowers and the leaves to his satisfaction. In some places he has scraped paint off while, in others, he has painted over dried paint. Every so often he must have returned to this painting and added a few brushstrokes in an attempt to improve it." In this way, the painting remained in Monet's studio as an open question nearly until the end of his life. "It was only in the 1920s that he finally decided to add his signature," Serres explains. (A similar case would be *French Window at Collioure*, which Henri Matisse painted in 1914 but never allowed out of his studio.)

At what point does the conscientiousness that forbade Monet from signing his painting for 40 years become self-defeating? It's hard to say. Is Walter Benjamin's unfinished, perhaps unfinishable *Arcades Project* a quagmire or a posthumous triumph? I can't help but think of a line that has haunted me for years, though I've forgotten the name of the book where I found it. Somewhere, the Mexican mystery writer Paco Ignacio Taibo II speaks of the absurd marriage between a book that will never be written and the man who will never write it. One's involuted relation to the work is that of a debt in the worst sense: "the relation of a debtor who will never finish paying to a creditor who will never finish up using the interest on the debt" (the words are Gilles Deleuze's).

The Met Breuer's treatment of the unfinished is itself unfinished, because the true saints or heroes or victims of the unfinished cannot be seen there or anywhere. They are its unknown masters. In his 1988 novel *The Botanical Garden*, Jean Frémon—a remarkable writer who also happens to be a gallerist—introduces a minor character, one Pinto, a painter "who managed to pass unseen." I assume that, like many of the book's other characters, Pinto is based on a real person. "The devotion he bore for painting was equaled in intensity only by the hatred he expressed for his own production," Frémon writes.

> As a general rule, his passion for self-denigration led him to destroy any painting which might be able to pass as finished and to retain only those in

which failure was manifest, the only ones toward which he showed a little interest and affection. "It's because," he said, "they still need me, they call to me, they keep me alive, they are still waiting for the inner light, a simple stroke, perhaps a single brush-stroke."

There were thus hundreds of them, arranged standing, in staggered rows, leaning against one another, and he wandered among them all day murmuring, "A stroke, just a stroke."

Later, toward the end of the novel, Pinto is given a posthumous retrospective by the Museum of Modern Art. That, I suspect, is the wholly invented part of his story.

JAN VERSWEYVELD

A scene from Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, directed by Ivan van Hove.

Our Master Builder

by ALISA SOLOMON

Self-sacrifice has stormed into New York City theaters this season. On one stage, a Viennese aristocrat hands over to a Jewish psychiatrist the pass that would have released him from Nazi detention. Elsewhere, a failing traveling salesman commits suicide in the hope that his family will receive a life-insurance settlement that would allow his son to get ahead at last; a Brooklyn longshoreman betrays his wife's undocumented cousins to immigration authorities and provokes a fatal showdown with one of them; and a 17th-century New England farmer goes to the gibbet rather than relinquish a signed confession admitting that he's consorted with the devil. All the men wracked by these storms permanently absent themselves from moral conundrums, in gestures at once self-aggrandizing and self-abnegating: What can one do when capitalism, racism, male honor, and mass hysteria seem to toss one against the limits of principled action?

We owe the larger-than-life presence of this quandary to the 2015 centennial of Arthur Miller's birth. Along with some public readings, conferences, symposia, and publications, four of Miller's major plays have been or are still being staged in New York as part of the ongoing festivities: *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953), *A View From the Bridge* (1955), and *Incident at Vichy* (1964). Seeing them all in the space of five months (two of them in dazzling Broadway productions by the experimental Belgian director Ivo van Hove), I was struck not only by how Miller's protagonists fatally escape a crisis when it comes to a head, but also by how often—in three of these four plays—the crisis is provoked by the hero's illicit desire, which is to say, by a woman's erotic power.

In *Salesman*, Biff discovers Willy Loman's affair with a woman he's met on the road, which is revealed toward the play's end as the cause of the rift between father and son, as well as of Biff's loss of ambition. In *Bridge*, Eddie Carbone upsets communal mores and calls the law in order to rid his home of the man loved by his 17-year-old

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Alisa Solomon, director of the arts and culture concentration at the Columbia Journalism School, is the author of Wonder of Wonders: A Cultural History of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

niece, Catherine, a woman Eddie lusts after incestuously. In *The Crucible*, John Proctor is condemned—and several innocents of Salem hanged as witches—because he has adulterously "known" and then jilted his household servant, Abigail, also 17. Though these plays also have female characters that are grounded and less sexualized, I couldn't help fixating on the function of women in Miller's dramas as the agents of his heroes' well-made comeuppance.

Van Hove's volcanic versions of *Bridge* at the Lyceum Theater and *The Crucible* at the Walter Kerr Theater (until July 17) have made this point pop to the surface, in no small part because his Catherine (Phoebe Fox) and Abigail (Saoirse Ronan) are presented as women who are bewildered and enraged, respectively, by their lack of power within stifling patriarchies. Still, being thoroughly captivated, even thrilled, as I watched these masterfully constructed plays in the theater, and then riled up as I thought about them afterward, I realized that I was stuck in the same polarized ambivalence that dogged Miller's long, illustrious career as one of the most lauded American playwrights—and one of the most vilified.

Along with Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams, Miller is part of the triumvirate of American dramatic genius. He won a Pulitzer Prize and some Tony Awards, has constantly held the stage (to this day, he remains one of the top 20 most-produced playwrights in America), and enjoys an apparently permanent lock on high-school English syllabuses. (*The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman* still occupy ninth and 36th place, respectively, on the list of most-assigned texts, according to a survey of literature teachers.) Persistently exploring the dilemmas that an individual confronts within, and against, the social world—in particular, amid the promise and the imperfections of America—Miller reigned for more than half a century, until his death in 2005, as the liberal conscience of the national stage. He always believed, without embarrassment, in the moral force of drama. His great achievement was to create plays that, performed well, leave us in a place of satisfying dramatic closure, but ethical—even political—suspension.

Still, the initial newspaper reviews of Miller's plays were often mixed. More important, he was reviled by those theater critics who, once upon a time, held forth in periodicals where serious writing about the stage was considered mandatory: Stanley Kauffmann, Robert Brustein, Richard Gilman, Gordon Rogoff, Erika Munk, Eric Bentley. Here's just a sample of their fault-finding with Miller: "a 'great' American playwright whose work is mostly mediocre" (Kauffmann); "noisy virtue and moral flatulence" (Brustein); "second-rate but superficially engrossing" (Gilman); "soppy and schematic" (Rogoff); "muddled and banal individual psychology" (Munk); "terrible inertness…striving after a poetry and an eloquence which the author does not achieve…. The world has made the author important before he has made himself great" (Bentley). Most of the writers who threw these darts were my teachers; no doubt some of their reasoned antagonism seeped into me, but it often evaporates as I am swept up into the high-pressure atmosphere that gathers around Miller's plays in performance.

These critics' collective beef was of its moment. When *Salesman* opened on Broadway in 1949 and was hailed for bringing a tragic dimension to the common man, the Living Theatre was already two years old, and committed to exploding the domestic drama by bringing the most daring of European works to the American stage and, soon, developing a local, radical avant-garde. Bentley's *Playwright as Thinker* had appeared in 1946, championing the far edgier European modernists. Compared to these forces, Miller was relegated to the newly named category of the "middlebrow," popularized by Russell Lynes the very month of *Salesman*'s premiere, and elaborated as "midcult" by the critic Dwight Macdonald. The latter defined it as work that "pretends to respect the standards of High Culture while in fact it waters them down and vulgarizes them." Marrying commerce to art, Broadway was midcult by definition, and Miller's plays, with their bourgeois high-mindedness, were to his detractors the quintessence of shallow profundity.

Nowadays, long after the postmodern collapse of "high" and "low," when much of the best dramatic writing appears on TV and Ligeti quartets are performed in clubs that serve beer (hell, when Ivo van Hove is directing on Broadway), those midcentury labels are quaint artifacts, expressing an elite anxiety about the rising postwar middle class. We can see Miller's plays more contextually now, and appreciate what they achieved on their own terms.

For his part, Miller made no apologies for writing to a popular audience. Why wouldn't he want a packed house? Tickets were cheap when his career began in the late 1930s, and, he mused later, the audience "had not yet been atomized, as it would be by the mid-fifties, into young and old, hip and square, or even political left and middle and right. So the playwright's challenge was to please not a small sensitized supporting clique but an audience representing, more or less, all of [white] America." He recognized that "trash" enjoyed longer runs than, say, Laurence Olivier in a Greek tragedy or T.S. Eliot's *Cocktail Party*, but insisted that in those years, it was far from irrational to set a serious play's sights on the audience that flocked to midtown Manhattan instead of the Village.

To succeed on Broadway, Miller explained, meant working in a recognizable—or recognizable enough—realistic mode. (A superb essayist, Miller produced a virtual primer on American playwriting with his ruminations over the years; one of the advantages of the centennial is that his analyses of theater, as well as his reportage and social commentary, have been reissued in a new volume of *Collected Essays* [Bloomsbury; £29.99] comprising three of his previous anthologies.) Even so, Miller was experimenting with dramatic form pretty much from the start. His breakthrough work, *All My Sons* (1947), was the last not to flout the naturalistic frame. In *Salesman*, Miller innovatively used the simultaneity that theater uniquely provides to make the presentness of the past felt in the story and the action. The play unfolds in two time zones: One is that of Willy's decline, as he finds himself unable to complete his sales trips and is fired from the company to which he has devoted himself for 34 years. In the other, scenes and figures from Willy's near and distant past intrude into the action, appearing in the Loman home without bothering to observe the scenic conventions of walls or doors.

The permeability of time and space was one of the strongest aspects of the excellent production of *Salesman* presented by the New Yiddish Rep in the fall. Set on a nearly bare stage, with just a small table and a couple of chairs (no iconic two-story house like the one Jo Mielziner ingeniously designed in 1949), the drama was dematerialized. Miller had originally conceived of the play as taking place in Willy's head, and the New Yiddish Rep's production came closer than any I've seen to creating that properly disorienting perspective. Actor Avi Hoffman shifted realms so organically that it felt like we were looking out from his confused, chaotic, and claustrophobic mind.

The production was performed in Yiddish with English supertitles, using a translation created by Joseph Buloff soon after the play first opened. When Buloff performed the role of Willy, or *Vili*, in the 1951 version in New York, with Miller's blessing, the *Commentary* critic George Ross titled his review "*Death of a Salesman* in the Original." From early on,

critics like Mary McCarthy (no fan of Miller's) and Leslie Fiedler accused the Lomans of being crypto-Jews, as if Miller were trying to pass dramaturgically. But this is a family whose lives are so out of time and place, so generally deracinated, that the question of its Jewish origins, fun as it may be to debate, is immaterial. The play is set "today"—presumably, 1949—and the boys not only didn't serve in the war; they seem never to have heard of it. Just as we never learn what's inside Willy's suitcase (because it's himself that Willy is selling, after all), those historic and naturalistic details are beside the point: The Lomans occupy a more mythic realm.

In his essay "*Salesman* at Fifty," written in 1999, Miller conceded that the Lomans could be recognized as "Jews light-years away from religion or a community that might have fostered Jewish identity." Still, the power of the Yiddish performance lay not in returning the family to its roots, but in heightening the play's emotion. How much more devastating the final showdown between Biff (Daniel Kahn) and Vili sounds in Yiddish: "*Du bist gornisht*!" Biff shouts. ("You are nothing.") "*Gornisht*! *Gornisht*!" And the language seemed to anchor Suzanne Toren's Linda, who came off, atypically, as weary but strong. Director Moshe Yassur also used the language to separate the sons even further from their father: The boys break into English between themselves sometimes—poignantly so in the restaurant scene when they pick up a couple of women—abandoning Vili linguistically as well as physically, and giving him one more way to realize that he has passed his use-by date. The fluid roll of the Yiddish sharpens his alienation.

It wasn't just Miller's family-centered insistence on narrative that irked his critics; there was also his politics, or rather the alleged preachiness of his plays, which is hardly separable from their alleged realism. That Miller had become a prominent public intellectual and literary statesman—serving as the first American president of PEN, speaking out on a wide range of issues involving human rights and free expression—perhaps exacerbated the problem. Those not listening carefully could have mistaken the hectoring of some of his characters for the voice of his op-eds.

Incident at Vichy is a case in point. It's a play derided for its lack of credibility or character development, even though Miller was also sneered at for writing the kinds of plays that were expected to highlight such features. In other words, critics chided Miller for writing realism at all as well as for not being enough of a realist.

It was easy to see what they meant as I watched the Signature Theatre's production of *Vichy* in November. Set in a commandeered Vichy police station in 1942, it's the most linear of Miller's plays, in style and staging. Ten men, rounded up on suspicion of being Jews, are called one by one from a waiting-area bench into an offstage space where their papers will be checked—as well as, one character makes sure to explain, their presumably circumcised penises. Each is summoned by a reluctant, obliging officer and disappears from the stage.

While the steady diminution of the dramatis personae structures the play's action, its marrow is the men's debate over why they've been detained, whether the rumors of Jewish extermination can be true, how they might resist, what responsibility entails, and what constitutes solidarity. By the time the group has dwindled to the last two prisoners—a Jewish psychiatrist named Leduc (a brooding Darren Pettie) and an aristocratic Viennese aesthete, Von Berg (a wooden Richard Thomas), clearly hauled in by mistake—the argument has become more personal. Leduc calls for Von Berg's "responsibility," and, in a spontaneous, self-sacrificing gesture, the Austrian returns from the offstage inspection, shoves his pass into Leduc's hands, and pushes him out to the street. Then he awaits his fate as new prisoners are brought in.

The drama is not without its tendentiousness. It was the second work that Miller wrote after an eight-year hiatus from playwriting, and he wrote it quickly; it was inspired, in part, by his coverage for the *New York Herald Tribune* of a war-crimes trial in Frankfurt of former Auschwitz guards. When the play premiered in 1964, the Open Theater was devising new forms; Peter Brook's Artaudian production of Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade* was about to land in New York, arguing even more forcefully for a visceral, intensely visual theater. Miller's row of yakking men could only seem stagnant in such a context, and their long-winded arguments slack and sluggish at a time of urgent calls to radical action.

Nonetheless, even in the flat production at the Signature, I found myself absorbed by the arguments and left the theater reconsidering the play as a sort of rhetorical chorale, a form in which psychological character might matter no more than in a piece by, say, the Wooster Group.

Not that Miller would have thought of his work as belonging to the same species as that

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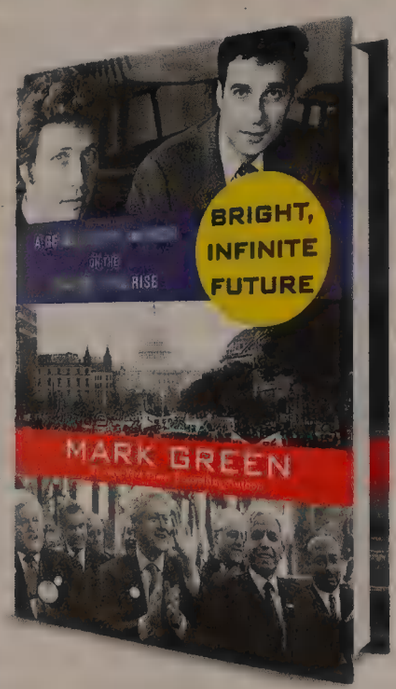

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of the text-fracturing, narrative-nuking, high-tech troupe. (In fact, he once forced the group to close a show that, without permission, had sampled 20 minutes of *The Crucible*.) Still, as much as Miller remained a master of forward-driving storytelling, with each line of dialogue pressing hard on the gas pedal, he was constantly trying new approaches. He deployed elements of symbolism, expressionism, and Greek tragedy, among other styles. Late in his career, he even tried vaudeville, a form he'd adored as a boy; its riveting melodramas had him anxiously "clawing at my mother's arm," and probably taught him a lot about plotting for anticipation and denouement.

The Miller centennial might have been an opportunity to probe these investigations and expand our experience of Miller onstage, but the repertoire this season draws only from the greatest hits. A brief, but welcome, exception will be a one-night reading at the Public Theater on May 2 of *No Villain*. Miller wrote the play as a sophomore at the University of Michigan, and it won a substantial playwriting prize (which is what had drawn him to that campus in the first place). Despite some premieres of later plays and an occasional regional-theater production, Miller's playwriting career in the regular US repertoire effectively—and unjustifiably—ended with *The Price* in 1968. This is astonishing, since Miller had 37 more highly productive years. The same was true for O'Neill and Williams. We seem to freeze our classic dramatists in the amber glow of their first major successes; it's as though once they've made their reputations, we lose interest in them as creative artists. Apparently, we prefer monuments.

Thanks to two collections of Miller's plays issued for the centennial, however, a far wider range of his work is available to readers. In *The Penguin Arthur Miller: Collected Plays* ($30), a rich if cumbersome paperback volume nearly 1,300 pages long and weighing in at three and a half pounds, almost half of the contents are likely to be unfamiliar to all but the most erudite Millerologists as well as theatergoers in England, where Miller's late plays have found a warmer welcome.

The anthology contains Miller's preferred "authoritative texts" for the plays. If you want to compare the initial one-act version of *A View From the Bridge* (1955) with the now-familiar "full-length" version (1956), you'll need the Library of America's more comprehensive three-volume set, *The Collected Plays of Arthur Miller* ($115), edited by Tony Kushner (who, like Miller, has been an occasional contributor to this magazine). These volumes include even more of the lesser-known works, as well as Miller's notes and essays on his plays and a half-dozen wartime radio scripts. (Miller had an early job writing for the dramatic radio series *Cavalcade of America*.) They round out the literary portrait of Miller as a man consistently seeking to stretch himself and the dramatic form.

These texts also allow one to trace the preoccupations that began early and persisted throughout Miller's seven-decade career. One of the thickest threads running through his oeuvre concerns a crisis of masculinity and manly honor, which often weaves itself around the moral agons at the heart of the plays. *A View From the Bridge*'s Eddie Carbone and *The Crucible*'s John Proctor are stark examples. I suspect that van Hove chose to direct these two plays in order to stress this point. "I want my name!" Eddie demands as he confronts Marco, his wife's cousin, whom he accuses of smearing him as a snitch (which, in fact, Eddie is). "I have given you my soul; leave me my name!" cries Proctor as he refuses to hand over a signed confession.

New to Broadway this season, van Hove has been working in New York for nearly two decades, making a name for himself at the New York Theatre Workshop and at BAM as a vivid, sometimes controversial reinterpreter of canonical plays. Over the years, along with the designer Jan Versweyveld (his artistic and life partner), van Hove has turned familiar plays, or at least characters, inside out, seeming to extract the subtext and then smear it onto the performance's surface, often in highly physical confrontations (a sloppy, violent food fight at the climax of Molière's *The Misanthrope*) or blunt metaphors (a water-filled bathtub at the center of his *Streetcar Named Desire*, into which many of the characters plunged). He consistently draws brave, stupendous performances from his actors, and the Miller plays are no exception. Sometimes van Hove strips a work down to its shattering, elemental emotions, as in the two productions of his I've admired most. In an adaptation of Ingmar Bergman's 1973 television series *Scenes From a Marriage*, van Hove had three pairs of actors play the troubled married couple at different stages; in his version of Kushner's *Angels in America*, the multilayered action unfolded on a mostly bare stage against flickering projections.

Van Hove brought a sense of inexorable intensity to his two Miller productions. Contrary to the cliché often applied to Miller, he did not breathe new life into a pair of familiar classics. (What reviewers really mean when they use that phrase is that they'd forgotten how powerfully Miller's works can play onstage, how arresting and moving they can be.) Rather, van Hove scraped away the thick varnish of sentimentality and sanctimony that has built up on Miller's plays over the decades—and he used a strong solvent.

For *Bridge*, he picked up on Miller's allusion to Greek tragedy and ritualized the play. He and Versweyveld placed the action atop a blank square platform, adorned with only a couple of thin benches along its perimeter. With some spectators seated in bleachers on two sides and the rest in the conventional auditorium out front, the space looked like a boxing ring—or, with partial walls sometimes raised around it, a shark tank.

Gone with the furniture of a Brooklyn apartment is any shred of specific setting: no streetscape, no immigrant accents, no shoes, and no bridge, except insofar as Alfieri (Michael Gould), the neighborhood lawyer and friend to Eddie (Mark Strong), serves to link the audience to the space of primal conflict—between Eddie and his desire, between Eddie and his community. Until the bloody end, Alfieri stays outside that seething box, prowling the periphery of the action. Miller's idea of Alfieri as a Greek chorus has never worked so well. We need the buffer.

The Crucible can't quite be distilled in the same manner: It's too political, but not political in the reductive way that teenagers learn about all over the country. The play doesn't overlay the Salem witch hunts directly onto the red purges of the McCarthy era, and it was never meant to. Rather, the subject—the protagonist, you could even say—is the community. In the face of terror and fundamentalist absolutes, it behaves hysterically. The thin bonds of neighborliness and common cause that hold a society together, despite disputes over property and other issues, come unglued. With a public fueled by fear and willful ignorance, the state/church blithely and repeatedly commits murder in its name. How easy it is, Abigail learns, to whip a mob into a frenzy when you can convince them of their own righteousness. And how quickly it takes on a life of its own.

Van Hove trimmed away a couple of short scene-openings to streamline the action, but, as usual, did not significantly alter the text. His production reveals it as a hurtling and terrifying story where no one is left unscathed and no one is wholly innocent—or entirely guilty. Even Abigail, who can be represented as the stereotypical woman scorned, comes across here as a servant-girl chafing at her lack of agency.

Perhaps to evoke the infantilized position that the girls and, eventually, all of the

accused inhabit, van Hove and Versweyveld set the action in a schoolroom. A chalkboard with an oath of obedience penned upon it becomes the never-clean slate for an accumulation of tests and vows.

Van Hove blocks the actors' movements to emphasize the communal nature of the calamity. As they enter their state of collective hysteria, the girls twitch and curl their hands; they clump together as if pulled by Abigail's magnetism and move as a unit. In the last act, van Hove moves the community's authorities in a similar way: The men cluster into a menacing scrum.

As the girls shudder and stare in their final group assertion of the devil's presence, van Hove produces a coup de théâtre: a stage-right wall of windows bursts open and a gale gushes through, leaving light fixtures swinging from the ceiling and debris cluttering the floor. It becomes the postapocalyptic setting for the astonishingly tender last scene in which Proctor (Ben Whishaw) and his wife, Elizabeth (Sophie Okonedo), meet for the last time. The effect invites the audience to imagine the specter of danger along with the citizens of Salem. We know it is fictive, both theatrically and within the story, but I could feel the chill winds blowing. These days, I know they are all too real. ■

Skepticism Renewed

by RICHARD BOURKE

Hume
An Intellectual Biography.
By James Harris.
Cambridge. 621 pp. $55.

Over the past 50 years, the philosopher who's played the most significant role in the cultural life of the United States isn't Richard Rorty, Jerry Fodor, or Martha Nussbaum, but rather Immanuel Kant. This is largely because of his impact on postwar trends in moral philosophy. Kant's influence during this period coincided with the rise of ethics as a dominant concern in political theory. John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin, and Thomas Nagel are among the most prominent examples of this widespread tendency. It is possible to exaggerate the novelty of this development; after all, questions of morality have always had a place in reflective debate about politics. Yet the strict subordination of politics to morals in recent decades does represent some kind of departure, or at least a return to a style of Kantian thought that had long been out of favor. Compared with current tendencies in political philosophy, normative inquiry was of marginal importance to the leading political thinkers in the first half of the 20th century, among them Max Weber, Otto Bauer, Michael Oakeshott, John Maynard Keynes, Friedrich Hayek, Raymond Aron, and Hannah Arendt.

I don't mean to suggest that these thinkers took no interest in human values. Because politics is a product of the struggle over values, political thinking can hardly avoid such a pivotal issue. But there's a difference between the study of human preferences and attachments and a preoccupation with an ideal theory of value. An ideal view of politics begins with a normative approach to power; it operates with a purely moral conception of how social and political relations ought to be organized. From this perspective, as Kant proposed in an essay he wrote in 1793, the rules of prudence ought to be sacrificed to the dictates of moral law. Dishonesty in politics might well be advantageous, to take one example, but from where Kant was standing, it could never be morally right.

The normative turn in political philosophy has overlapped with the rise of moralism in certain areas of US policy, most obviously in international affairs. This tendency came to prominence in the early years of the new millennium, as Dick Cheney and George W. Bush set about reconceiving the international order in terms of ideal values. Because democracy was now regarded as a "universal" norm, it was thought that it might systematically replace dictatorships across the globe: With the aid of strategic military intervention, authoritarian regimes would fall like dominoes throughout the Middle East. In line with this approach, practical obstacles were wished away under the influence of a crusading righteousness.

In general terms, the retreat of political philosophy onto the terrain of abstract morals has exacted a heavy cost. The loss has been twofold. First, a narrow focus on the absolute obligations of duty is prone to disregard the tangible desires of human beings. Second, an exclusive interest in what is unconditionally justified can lead to the suspension of all concern with what is beneficial. In the decades before Kant set about converting political theory into a branch of moral inquiry, the great Scottish philosopher and historian David Hume had been cultivating what amounted to the opposite perspective. Hume's program had two core features: It examined what actually motivated people instead of what they ought to do in principle; and it calculated the advantages that emerged from a course of action as opposed to evaluating its intrinsic merits. This approach might be seen as a criticism of Kantianism before Kant. More accurately, it can be viewed as a rejection of Stoicism, elements of which were later revived by Kant in combination with strands of Lutheran pietism. It is right, in Kant's analysis, that the Stoics were ultimately deemed deficient, but they were to be praised for equating happiness with "purely moral perfection."

Remarkably, James Harris's intellectual biography of Hume is the first to have been attempted. As such, it covers the full trajectory of Hume's intellectual career—from his earliest experiments in epistemology and ethics, through his views on religion, economics, and politics, to his mature efforts to complete his classic *History of England*. The result is an engrossing reconstruction of his ideas along with his position in 18th-century intellectual life. A significant place is given to Hume's "anatomy" of human nature, and thus to the criticism of Stoicism which he developed in that context.

Much of Harris's achievement derives from his capacity for cogent synthesis. For the first time, the various advances made by two generations of innovative scholarship about Hume are brought together in a comprehensive treatment. At the same time, Harris's book brings its own distinctive analysis to bear on the full range of Hume's output. Harris emphasizes three main points: Hume's ambition as a writer, the diversity of his pursuits, and the implications of his skepticism. It was above all as a skeptic that Hume took issue with attempts to revivify the philosophy of Stoicism.

Each of these claims is subtly implicated in the others. As Harris shows, it was partly Hume's yearning for fame as an author that drove him to pursue a variety of literary ventures. This diversity, in turn, was held together by a general skepticism about the mental and moral aptitudes of human beings. In his 20s, Hume was determined to improve his "talents in literature." At the end of his life, he recol-

Richard Bourke, a professor of the history of political thought at Queen Mary University of London, is the author of Empire and Revolution: The Political Life of Edmund Burke *(Princeton).*

lected the landmarks in his career in terms of a sequence of "literary occupations." Throughout, he resolved to experiment in a variety of genres—historical narrative, philosophical argument, the essay, and the dialogue. As Harris emphasizes, Hume's craft in each was a constant preoccupation and a source of pride. The goals of elegance and precision guided everything he wrote, and whatever he undertook was elaborately revised. The desire for recognition encouraged literary experimentation, increasing the range of subjects to which he could apply his skepticism.

At certain points after his death, Hume was regarded primarily as a philosopher, while at other times he was seen as a historian. For the Whig politician Henry Brougham, he was a sagacious chronicler; for John Stuart Mill, his only accomplishment was in philosophy. Harris argues that instead of trying to compartmentalize Hume in accordance with a modern academic division of labor, we should see him as a "man of letters" who contributed to a variety of fields. It becomes clear that the copious range of Hume's assignments is best explained in terms of his vocation as a writer. His self-conscious attachment to the role of author is partly explained by his relative financial independence: He was not forced to survive by the "trade" of writing, nor to make his way in one of the professions. At the same time, he was able to remain aloof from the entanglements of patronage.

The image of the philosopher has been transformed over the past 200 years, especially since the rise of a professional class of faculty members, which began around the end of the 19th century. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the role was less clear-cut. Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* was a political polemic rather than an academic tract. Rousseau chose to write fiction and autobiography as well as works on natural law and political economy. Adam Smith saw his *Wealth of Nations* as an exercise in philosophy and regarded himself in a Humean vein as a "philosopher" in the broad sense. Although Harris makes plain that Hume was bent on succeeding as a man of letters, he also shows that he pursued this task in what he termed a "philosophical" mode. What Hume meant was that his philosophy would be a vehicle for his skepticism. As he embraced the intellectual modesty that he thought characterized a skeptical outlook, he also reconceptualized what skepticism could achieve.

After an early crisis of confidence, Hume spent his mid-20s studying philosophy in France, moving from Paris to Rheims in 1734 before settling in La Flèche in the Loire Valley the following year. Over the next two years, he came to terms with the writings of French luminaries like Nicolas Malebranche and Pierre Bayle. All the while, he was gestating a series of major works that would transform our understanding of epistemology, politics, and morals by subjecting many of the verities of ancient and modern philosophy to forms of doubt that were paralyzing and liberating at the same time.

In his first book, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, an astonishingly precocious work of philosophical genius published in 1739 but drafted two years earlier, we are invited to consider the limitations of forms of dogmatism that pretend to reach beyond the confines of our understanding to uncover the underlying principles of the universe—extending to the nature of God, his attitude toward his progeny, and the nature of our obligations to his will. For Hume, fundamental principles in metaphysics, such as final causes in nature or the ultimate grounds for human psychology, are as inaccessible to reason as the basic questions in natural religion: "Any hypothesis," as he put it, "that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature, ought at first to be rejected as presumptuous and chimerical." But while Hume regarded it as impossible to penetrate the hidden machinery of the universe, it was possible, he insisted, to improve our "knowledge of man." Explicitly following in the footsteps of Locke and the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, among others, Hume hoped to establish the "science of man" on the same foundations on which Bacon and Newton had advanced our knowledge of nature: by experimental observation of the empirical world, carried out with due attention and circumspection.

The science of human nature would therefore have to begin with individuals as they took part in the common affairs of life. Yet this proposed anatomy of social psychology was preceded by a critique of the powers of reason to explain the world outside the bounds of experience. This critique was directed against improbable hypotheses that had been generated by earlier systems of philosophy, from the ancients to Descartes and beyond. Hume's skepticism about earlier attempts to fathom the unfathomable bred in him a melancholy mixture of doubt and despair: "Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court? And whose anger must I dread?" Skepticism, Hume was indicating, unsettles the precepts of religion and ultimately destroys all trust and belief. Luckily, our nature soon distracts us from these uncertainties and prompts us to take comfort in the truths of custom and common sense.

For Hume, skepticism about metaphysical subjects ended in an indolence born of seclusion. The only solution was to transfer the skeptical impulse in philosophy from the solitude of the study to the wider social world. Under these circumstances, skepticism fostered equanimity rather than discontent. In society, the true skeptic acknowledged the value of common sense without submitting slavishly to its whims. Skepticism in this context was profitable and enabling; it criticized without destroying the conditions of criticism, which depended on the existence of society and government. The positive results of criticism could be seen in society, politics, and morals. Philosophy could expose damaging ideas in ethics, unsocial attitudes in religion, and dangerous postures in politics. We might usefully think of Hume as having tackled each of these in turn.

Harris adroitly captures the extent to which Hume was doubtful about all reigning systems of moral philosophy—including theories that based ethical conduct on the precepts of reason, those that traced social harmony to a shared sentiment of justice, and those that grounded moral judgment on the appetite for pleasure. In exposing each of these doctrines, Hume's skepticism was rewarding rather than incapacitating. It offered incisive correctives instead of a descent into abysmal uncertainty. In this spirit, Hume took issue with what he called "the selfish system of morals," associated in his 1751 *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* with Hobbes and Locke, whom he interpreted as seeking to reduce every human motive to self-interest or self-regard. Plainly, Hume believed, benevolence was all around us—evident in families, friendships, and clubs. Yet he also criticized the view, popularized by Francis Hutcheson, that moral sentiments were sufficient to guarantee the peace of society. Benevolence was real but not extensive, Hume concluded. It could flourish under favorable circumstances, including prosperity and benign government, but it would never simply be implemented at the behest of reason.

Hume's skepticism about the effectiveness of our rational faculties in moral judgment was partly directed against divines like Samuel Clarke, who tried to discover the criteria for virtue in an immutable measure of rightness accessible to the mind. At the same time, it was directed against latter-day Stoics like Shaftesbury, for whom the idea of virtue was sufficient to motivate good conduct. In fact, Hume believed, morality had its origins in

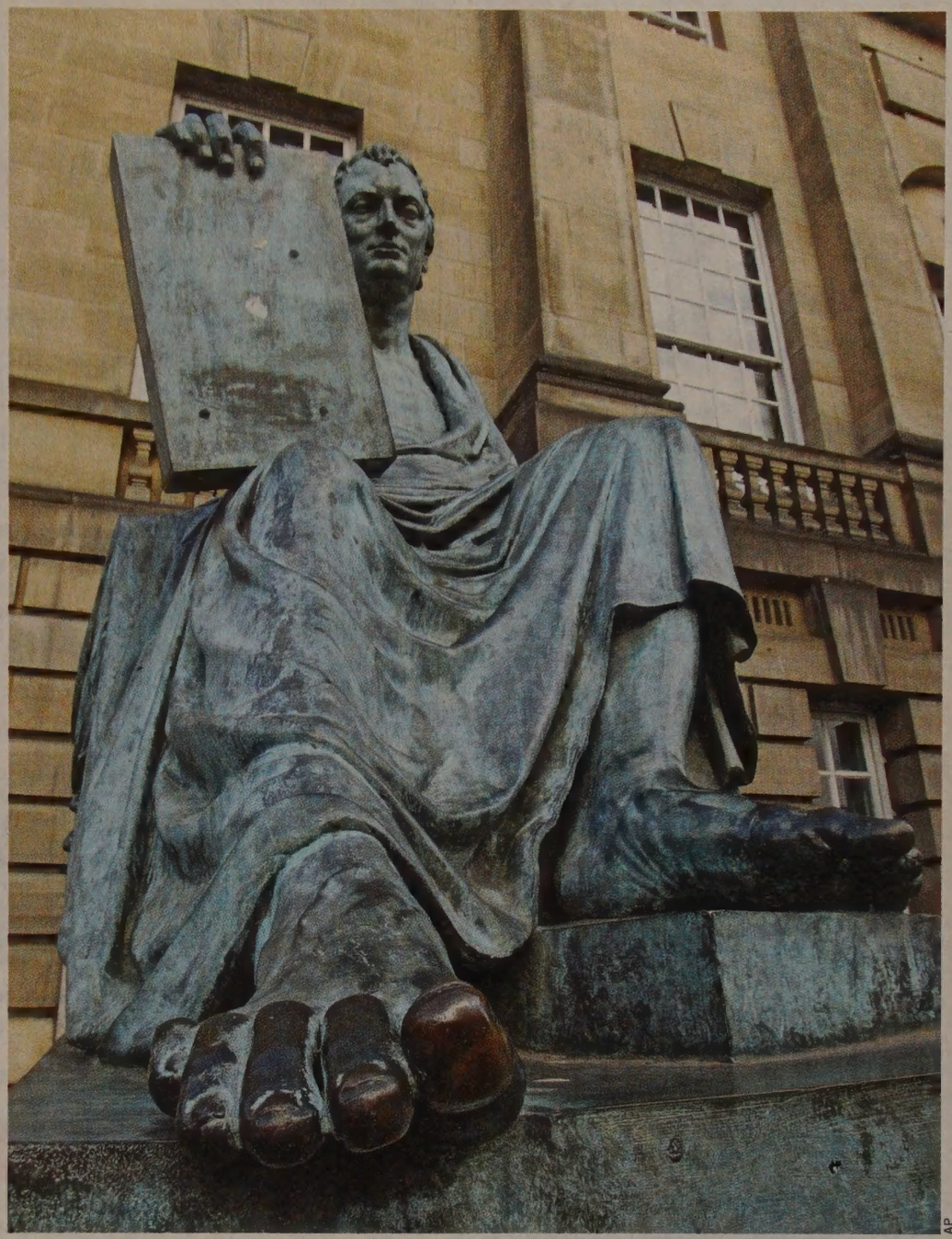
moral feelings, not rational principles. Incitement to action could only be sparked by a driving passion in the individual, not purely by the notion of what they ought to do. As Hume put it in a letter to Hutcheson in 1739, "virtue can never be the sole motive to any action."

On the basis of this insight, Hume reconceived the task of philosophy. It ought not to be championed, as the ancient schools had done, as a "medicine for the mind." Nor was it a source of rules for action that would guarantee righteousness. Its role was critical reflection rather than exhortation or consolation. Accordingly, such Stoic precepts as were to be found in Seneca or Epictetus were deemed to be misbegotten aspirations. Mere arguments could never move us without engaging our affections. Ideas of the good, in order to be effective, had to be rooted in what was agreeable. Philosophy for this reason had to educate through taste, by appeal to active psychological preferences. It was idle to prescribe what ideally ought to obtain. More than this, enforcing ideals that had no traction in existing mores would undermine the fabric of society.

Because philosophy, for Hume, was charged with intervening in social affairs, it was obliged to understand the current state of society as well as its processes of change. In that sense, it was a skeptical commentary on its own time, guided by historical understanding. This perspective makes sense of Hume's choice of projects after the *Treatise*: His *Essays*, written and revised from the 1730s through the 1770s, were a series of attempts to expose the prejudices of the age, while his *History* set those prejudices in a longer-term perspective by elucidating the reasons for their emergence. History, like philosophy, could not transform human behavior, but it could deepen our grasp of the circumstances in which we operated.

During his final 13 years, until his death in 1776, Hume extended his social repertoire and cultivated new friendships. He became acquainted with the leading French philosophes of the day and gained some knowledge of the rhythms of popular politics in London. However, his labors as a philosopher and historian were largely over, leaving him to refine his political ideas against the backdrop of metropolitan strife in the 1760s and then rebellion in the American colonies. As befitted a historically grounded social philosophy, the object of his skepticism shifted as circumstances changed.

Skepticism for Hume did not mean cynicism; it did not entail deriding cherished attitudes and opinions. As Harris notes, the outright atheism broadcast in Parisian salons seemed dogmatic and rebarbative to Hume. Even the "paradoxes" of Rousseau appeared pointlessly provocative. Rather than expose harmless prejudices to contempt, Hume set about exploring the consequences of belief. His aim was to eradicate counterproductive assumptions rather than dismantle benign customs. Religious dispositions, economic hypotheses, and political presuppositions could usefully be subjected to constructive criticism. An undertaking of this kind would not remodel entrenched "proclivities," but it could deepen our understanding of the context in which they operated. With this end in view, Hume challenged prevailing ideas about political parties, the contract of government, and the balance of trade. Heated disputes about each of these topics had ensured that they were misunderstood. By comparison, sober investigation revealed systematic confusion, showing how many of our beliefs frustrated our desires.

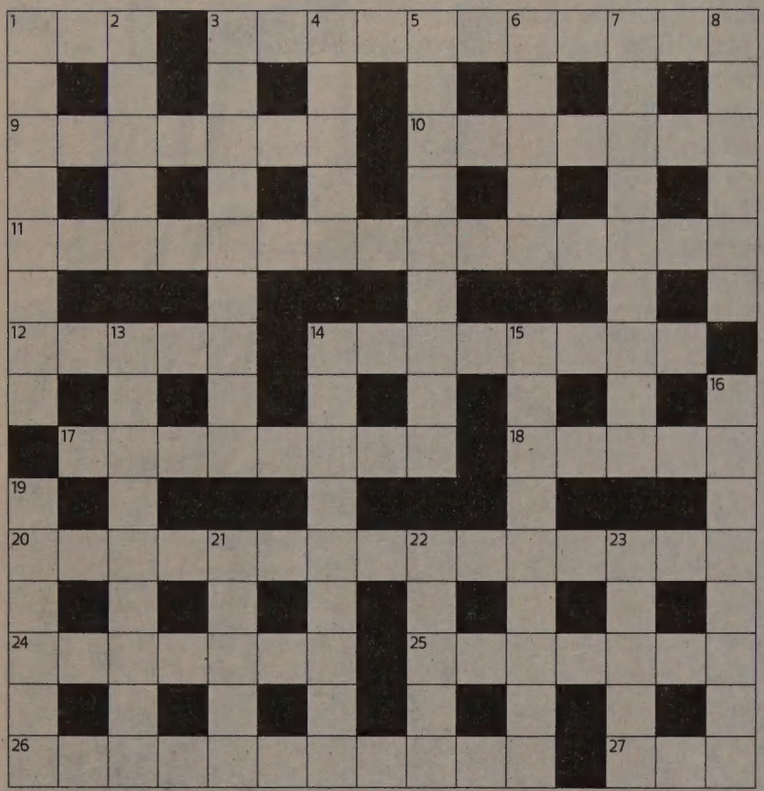


A bronze statue of David Hume in Edinburgh, Scotland. AP

Harris's study cumulatively demonstrates how Hume brought history and philosophy together. Since philosophy is powerless to prescribe the terms of its application, to be effective it has to understand the world in which it operates. More recent developments in Anglo-American thought have tended to withdraw from practical analysis into speculative accounts of ideal value. This has resulted in a species of political philosophy that has lost any grasp of the social world on which it pretends to reflect. The sterility of many of the resulting debates serves to recommend Hume's ambition to make philosophy historical and to render history philosophical. ■

Puzzle No. 3397

JOSHUA KOSMAN AND HENRI PICCIOTTO



ACROSS

1 & 27 Traitor goes before that woman sooner (6)

3 Mercury is alive (11)

9 Nobel Prize–winning writer reviewed Fleming and Newman (7)

10 Foster child, returning to have dinner, comes to a halt (5,2)

11 Apple overhauled iCloud (i.e., server) at first (6,9)

12 Hide mysteriously around large city (5)

14 Vietnamese borders engulfed in a second campaign (8)

17 Directions from Arizona huts? I'm disoriented (8)

18 Flurry of half-vitality (5)

20 Dog running back in Swiss city's sports field (8,7)

24 Sue, when unguarded, is like some gems (4-3)

25 Mom foolishly invested in most of Garbo's ring (7)

26 Navy errs, in a bizarre occasion that will help complete three of the Across clues (11)

27 See 1

DOWN

1 Deserter's grenade exploding near capital of Estonia (8)

2 Rehearsal for *Capone, Capone, Capone?* (5)

3 Friend's religion built from same quirk, reinterpreted (9)

4 I had gone ahead and done nothing (5)

5 Ruler, shifting from neutral to drive, adores equipment providing indulgent treatment? (3,6)

6 America: Asimov's home, in retrospect? (5)

7 Lives matter when protected by initials of 9 members of the aristocracy (9)

8 Meal is gone again? (6)

13 Bit of zucchini in one brand of potato chips leads you and me to an efficient way of serving food (4,5)

14 Turmoil at vicious individual who maims (9)

15 Weirdly grim conservative framing answer like some animals (9)

16 Car commercial included in list (8)

19 Peninsula left off of African nation (6)

21 Media outlet shot a bit of video outside Connecticut (3-2)

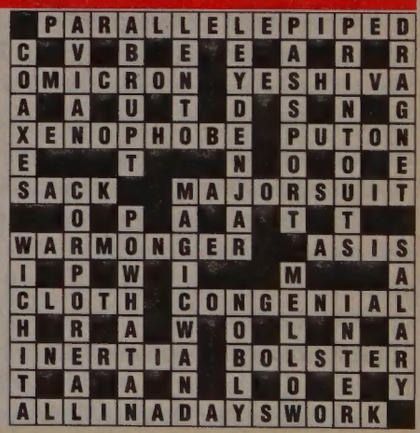
22 Lacking a subject, delusional statement is brought up in rigid doctrine (5)

23 Frisbee with zero speed or energy (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 3396

ACROSS **1** letter bank **10** [c]OMIC + RON **11** YE(SHIV)A **12** "Zen-ophobia," "Xena-phobia" **13** PU TON (rev.) **14** 2 defs. **16** 2 defs. **18** WARM(ONGE)R (*gone* anag.) **19** A SIS **22** C(LOT)H **23** anag. **26** anag. **27** BOL (rev.) + STER (anag.) **28** pun

DOWN **2** A + V(I)AN **3** anag. **4** hidden **5** LE(YDEN + J)AR (*deny* anag.) **6** PAS + SPORT **7** [s]-PRINTOUT-S **8** anag. **9** CO-AXES **15** anag. **16** MAG + I + CWAND (anag.) **17** PO + WHAT + AN **18** WI(CHI)TA (*wait* anag.) **20** SA(LAR[d])Y **21** MEL[t] + LOW **24** NO BLY **25** [pa]INTER



Kosman & Picciotto explain what they're up to at TheNation.com/article/solving-nations-cryptic-crosswords/.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for 18 double issues, published the second and last weeks of January, the last week of March through the last week of September, and the second and fourth weeks of December; each double issue counts as two issues delivered to subscribers) by The Nation Company, LLC © 2016 in the USA by The Nation Company, LLC, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003; (212) 209-5400. Washington Bureau: Suite 308, 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 546-2239. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Subscription orders, changes of address, and all subscription inquiries: *The Nation*, PO Box 433308, Palm Coast, FL 32143-0308; or call 1-800-333-8536. Publications Mail Agreement No. 40041477. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Bleuchip International, PO Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement No. 40612608. When ordering a subscription, please allow four to six weeks for receipt of first issue and for all subscription transactions. Basic annual subscription price: $89 for one year. Back issues, $6 prepaid ($8 foreign) from: *The Nation*, 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003. *The Nation* is available on microfilm from: University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Member, Alliance for Audited Media. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Nation*, PO Box 433308, Palm Coast, FL 32143-0308. Printed in the USA on recycled paper.

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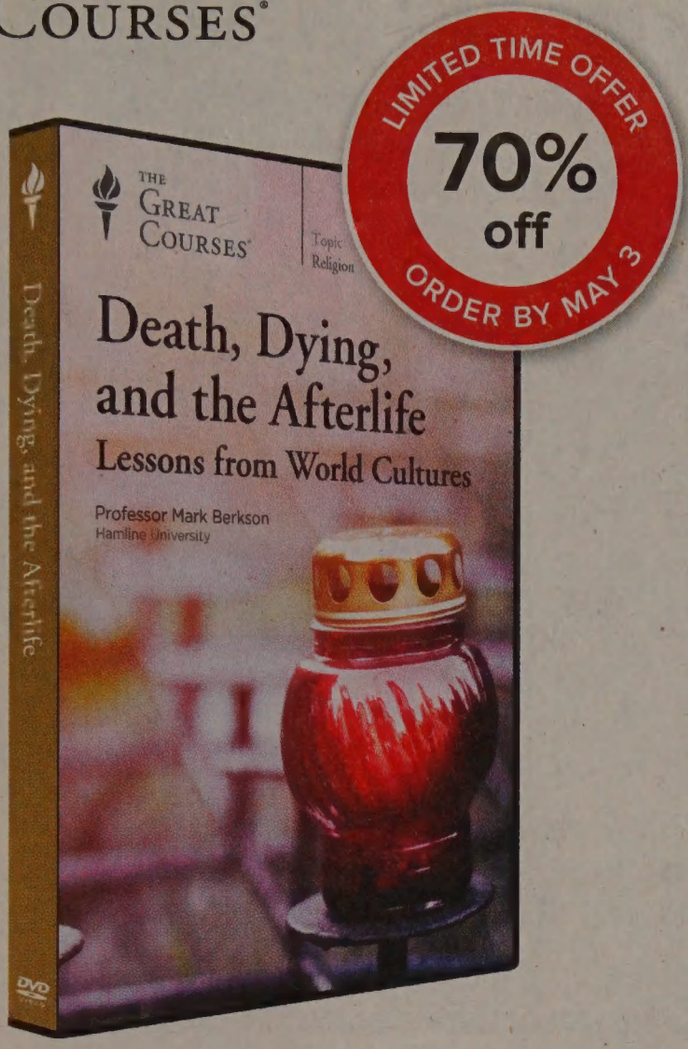

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14. The Process of Dying in Tibetan Buddhism
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